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TRANSACTIONS OF THE

PERTHSHIRE SOCIETY of NATURAL SCIENCE

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TRANSACTIONS OF THE

PERTHSHIRE SOCIETY of NATURAL SCIENCE

SPECIAL ISSUE

Papers presented on the occasion of
the 25th Anniversary of the
ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SECTION
in the City of Perth Museum and Art Gallery
on 24th March, 1973

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Cover: From early lithograph of Perth by D. O. Hill.
By kind permission of the Curator.

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Introduction

At a meeting of the Council of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science (now in the 106th year of its existence), it was decided to form an archæological section and a meeting was convened by Dr. Margaret Stewart in the Art Gallery on the 24th February, 1948, which was attended by fourteen people.

The section was formally inaugurated at the meeting, its objectives were set out and a committee, with Dr. Stewart as President, was elected. The section became affiliated to the Council for British Archæology and a member of the Scottish Regional Group of that body.

During its existence the section has arranged lectures in archæological and historical subjects, been responsible for, and assisted in, excavations, visited sites of interest, held joint meetings and visits with kindred societies and attended meetings and schools in various parts of the country. For a number of years the section has assisted the Archæological Division of the Ordnance Survey in looking over the countryside for unrecorded archæological sites, so that these could be entered, after confirmation, on new map issues.

In 1961 the activities were extended to include those of historical interest and the section title was amended accordingly.

On 24th March, 1973, an open meeting was held in the Art Gallery to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the section, which 120 people attended. These included representatives from many kindred societies throughout Scotland.

The meeting was opened by Mr. R. Butchart, President, who, on behalf of the section, extended a welcome to those attending, and invited Mrs. M. Morrison, a past President, to introduce the first speaker, Dr. M. E. C. Stewart, M.A., Ph.D., of Perth, who gave an illustrated lecture on "The Prehistory of Perthshire." After a break for coffee Dr. Anne Robertson, M.A., D.Litt., of the Hunterian Museum, The University of Glasgow, whose subject was "Roman Signal Stations or Watch Towers on the Gask Ridge," was introduced by Mrs. D. M. Lye, a past President.

The meeting then adjourned for a formal lunch at the Royal George Hotel. On the resumption of the meeting Mrs. K. S. Simpson, F.S.A.Scot., another past President, introduced the third, and last, speaker, Professor A. A. M. Duncan, M.A., of the

Department of Scottish History, The University of Glasgow, who spoke on " Perth. The first century of the burgh."

The proceedings closed with a social gathering in the Museum Rotunda where the celebratory cake, topped by a most remarkable model of a typical excavation made by Miss D. Alexander, a member, was cut with due ceremony by Dr. Stewart, the founder of the section. The toast (in champagne) to the section was proposed by Mr. J. Aitken, President of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, and was responded to by Mr. Butchart, President of the section. Professor Duncan spoke on behalf of the visitors and extended their congratulations to the section on attaining its 25th anniversary and good wishes for its future.

The Prehistory of Perthshire in the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd Millennia, B.C.

Margaret E. C. Stewart

Very little Mesolithic material has come out of Perthshire in spite of the fact that the Tay must surely have attracted early explorers. The lack of evidence for riverine settlement is all the more surprising in view of what has been found near the estuary. Mesolithic material has come from shell middens at Stannergate and probably also from near Broughty Ferry[1]. But further up the river, apart from the canoe at Friarton near Perth[2] and the foundations of a hut and an associated heap of the shells of edible fresh water molluscs found at a depth of 20′ below the General Accident Buildings at the east end of High Street in Perth[3] no other evidence has ever come to light. This lack of Mesolithic material is all the more remarkable in view of the evidence for North European Forest Cultures in the Forth valley.

Surface collected flints from the farm of Gothens near Blairgowrie[4] and from cultivated land below Dunsinnane have a Mesolithic/Neolithic facies but their chronological context is uncertain.

By the 4th and 3rd millennia B.C. the picture becomes much clearer. In the second volume of *The Chambered Tombs of Scotland* Miss Henshall lists six certain examples in Perthshire. These are the tombs of Clach na Tiompain in Wester Glenalmond, Kindrochet, Rottenreoch and Cultoquhey in the valley of the Earn, Derculich and Fortingall in Strathtay[5]. To that list should be added the tomb at Clathick in Strathearn, and in spite of its disqualification by Miss Henshall, the ruined tomb at Dull in Strathtay.

Clathick is unexcavated and lies exposed on moorland on the north side of Strathearn between Crieff and Comrie. Like Cultoquhey the inner end stone of the chamber rises for over 2′ above the flat slabs which roof the probably two compartmented tomb.

The site at Dull though it ended up as a 14th century corn roasting kiln started as a polygonal chambered passage grave.

Some of the upright slabs of the north wall of the original entrance passage were still *in situ* and it was noticeable that they splayed outwards as they approached what would have been the margin of the covering cairn. The same feature can be seen in some polygonal passage graves in the Hebrides notably Barpa Langass (UST6) and Loch a' Bharp (UST22) where the splay, now covered by cairn material, may originally have been an open funnel entry. At Dull the passage slabs could have had no functional significance for the corn roasting activities all of which took place in the remains of the chamber[6]. From its position on the north side of the valley the site at Dull would be complementary to the polygonal passage grave chamber further east at Derculich.

Of Miss Henshall's list of six, Clach na Tiompain, Kindrochet and Cultoquhey have all been excavated.

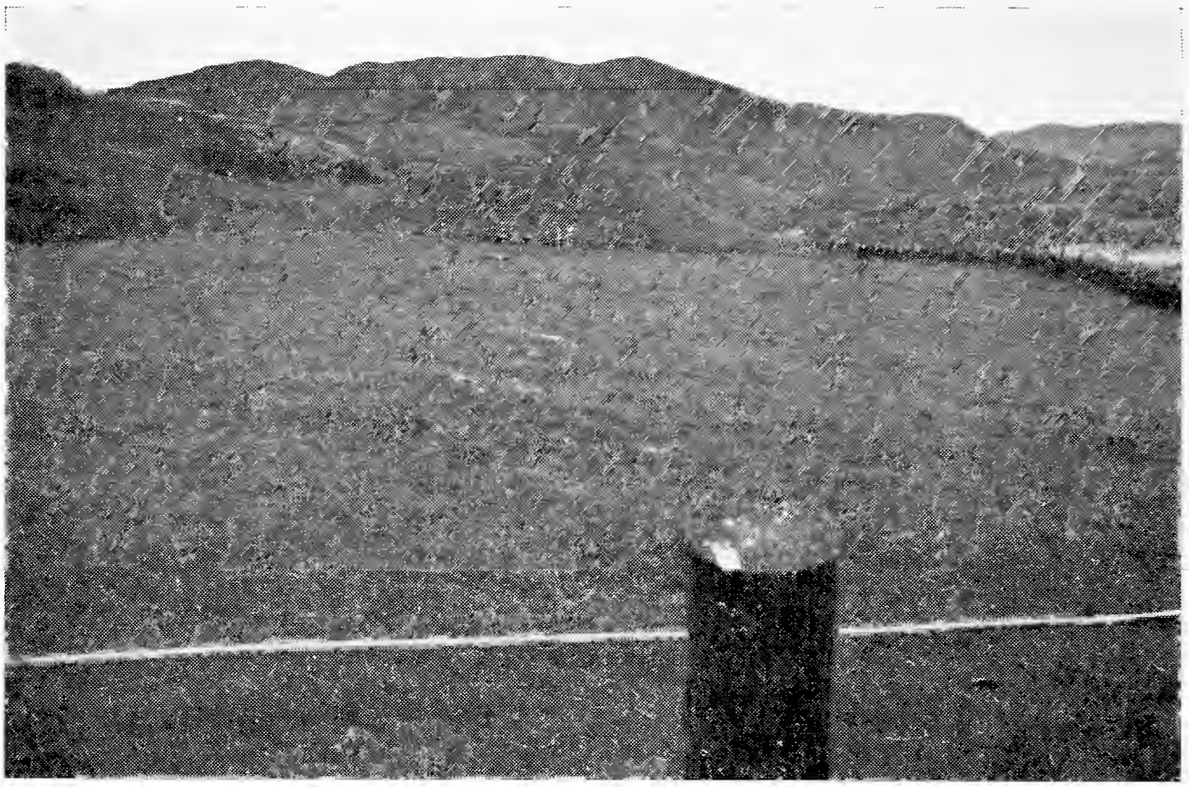
From Mr. J. G. Scott's recent work[7] on the typology of the segmented gallery grave type of chambered tomb it is now possible to regard Clathick and Cultoquhey as early rather than degenerate examples of their type. Fragments of pottery from the latter belonged to a wide-mouthed carinated bowl of Piggott's form G, the diameters of the mouth and carination being equal. The pottery is undecorated except for wide rippling on the neck and upper part of the bowl. On the line of the carination there have been vertically perforated lugs of which two survive. Miss Henshall points out[8] the rarity of this feature which so far is known from only two other sites in Scotland. It occurs in the Neolithic wares from the tumulus of Pitnacree in Strathtay[9] and from the chambered cairn of Achnacree on Loch Etive in Argyll. Chronologically it is dated by the Carbon 14 assessment of 2860 B.C. $\pm$90 (uncorrected for the old land surface at Pitnacree. Such vertically perforated lugs are unknown among contemporary Irish wares or from the Neolithic pottery of northern England and only occur in the causewayed camps of Windmill Hill and Whitehawk in the south of England. It might be worth noting that the Cultoquhey bowl doesn't have the hooked rim so typical of carinated bowls with ripple decoration from Scottish west coast chambered tombs. Miss Henshall has suggested that Clach na Tiompain and Kindrochet are multi-period tombs and that the former may have started as a row of four single compartmented stone cist graves to which various structural additions including the encapsulating cairn were added. If so then the earliest period at Clach na Tiompain could be regarded as part of the primary settlement of Central Perthshire.

How these chambered tomb builders reached Central Perthshire is a matter of controversy[10]. The starting point is the Clyde estuary and Dunbartonmuir at the south end of Loch Lomond where there is a group of chambered cairns. A paper on Strathtay in The Second Millennium B.C. suggested that the route into

Perthshire was by way of Loch Lomond, Glen Falloch and Glen Dochart. Any alternative to this either by way of Loch Fyne or the Trossachs would involve crossing hazardous country. Granted there is an impressive number of segmented gallery graves along the west shores of Loch Fyne, to come eastwards from there involves crossing a 2000′ watershed. The route by Aberfoyle and the Trossachs would have meant traversing the dense forest growing on the clay lands which bordered the upper reaches of the Forth. To-day Flanders Moss is an eloquent if minimal reminder of this forest in decay. The builders of segmented gallery graves were accustomed to travelling by water, after all they had arrived in western Scotland by sea, and Loch Lomond would have seemed infinitely preferable to the hazards, known and unknown of the Forth valley forest. This penetration into Perthshire from the west is a reminder of how accessible the area is to migratory movements using waterways as lines of communication. The Tay and the Earn and the Tummel are parts of a loch and river system which opens the way between east and west. There are in effect three routes across Perthshire. The northern route makes use of the Tay and the Tummel and then goes by Loch Rannoch and Loch Laidon across to the head of Loch Etive. The middle way is based on Loch Tay, Glen Dochart and Glen Falloch to Loch Lomond. The Earn and Loch Earn are linked to the middle route by Glen Ogle. These routes are basic to an understanding of Perthshire prehistoric archæology.

There are several large circular cairns in Perthshire whose exact cultural context is uncertain. In Strathearn there is the example near Almondbank Station[11] which forms the focal point of the recently recognised ritual complex at Huntingtower. Also near Almondbank is a great cairn of water worn boulders[12] which together with a recently discovered cairn 90′ in diameter and about 15′ in height on the farm of North Mains[13] might well be chambered. There is a somewhat smaller example near Strowan bringing the quota in Strathearn to four. In Strathtay there is a very large stone and earth tumulus at Balnaguard[14] and above Blair Atholl two similar cairns (one with a well marked boulder peristalith) in Glen Fender and Strathgroy[15]. In the absence of excavation it would be idle to speculate about the date of these burial mounds. Each year field work adds more examples to the list, the most recent recruit being a badly ruined site on the outskirts of Perth. Excavation of this expendable example might provide the necessary information which would place these monuments in their proper chronological setting.

A number of circular earth tumuli ranging in visible diameter from 40′ - 90′ are known from the river valleys of the Tay and the Earn. In 1964 Dr. Coles excavated one of this group at Pitnacree in Strathtay. The mound was found to cover an oblong structure



Burial Mound at Strathgroy, near Blair Atholl.

of water worn boulders with a lintelled passage entry but previous to this two massive post holes had held timber uprights associated with scattered cremation burials. These features have obvious affinities with the mortuary house revealed at one end of the Dalladies long barrow near Edzell[16]. The pottery from Pitnacree is echoed at Cultoquhey and not far away at New Fowlis[17] is another large earth tumulus externally of the same type as Pitnacree. These affinities confuse the picture of Neolithic man in Central Perthshire and another excavation of one of the numerous earth tumuli in this part of Scotland should be given high priority.

Two ritual sites possibly of the late third or early second millennium have been recognised in Perthshire. One has been excavated[18]. In 1965 Professor Piggott examined the concentric settings of standing stones at Croftmoraig near Kenmore. Two surprising facts emerged. The first was that the earliest period of the monument had involved the use of wooden uprights which in subsequent periods had been replaced by monoliths. This initial wooden structure may have been partly roofed perhaps open at the centre for here at ground level was a hearth and evidence of fire. Croftmoraig in fact may have been a provincial version of the great timber temples or meeting houses now being reconstructed from evidence like that obtained at Durrington Walls in Wiltshire. The second surprising fact was that in its third and latest phase the axis of Croftmoraig had been shifted through 90° from east/west to north/south.

The great ritual complex located by air photography in the neighbourhood of Huntingtower just west of Perth was described

at the official enquiry held to discuss its partial destruction by industrial development as representing a religious centre for a very great part if not indeed the whole of Scotland around 2000 B.C.

The second millennium archæology of Perthshire is rich in material but surprisingly difficult to put into perspective. There appear to be several groups of people with distinctive traditions.

The Scottish scene at this period is dominated by the advent of the Beaker people on the east coast. Coming directly from the coasts of Holland and North Germany they arrived in considerable numbers. They were farmers and in north-east Scotland they occupied the fertile lands bordering the coast and penetrated the river valleys inland in search of good grazing and cultivable territory. In their continental homes they had been accustomed to use the earliest types of bronze tools and weapons. Flat axes and short knife daggers had been part of their equipment and once established in Scotland they created a market for these and for the raw materials and craftsmen who could make them. Their arrival must have upset the equilibrium of the existing population and possibly it was the resulting disruption which forced small indigenous groups to move elsewhere. This may explain some types of monument and pottery recently identified in the Perthshire valleys.

Beaker pottery is infrequent in the Earn and Tay valleys but the example from Bailielands, Auchterarder[19] and the broken pot from the centre of the " four poster " setting at Lundin Farm[20] in Strathtay were both decorated with twisted cord impressions and so belong to an early group of Beaker migrants to the east coast. On the other hand the Tippermallo beaker[21] from near Methven is late. The panelled decoration on its long neck is reminiscent of a similar design on the fragment from the cist grave at the centre of The White Cairn in Glen Cochil above Aberfeldy[22]. These four beakers together with the degenerate beaker found with cremation at Balnaguard leave the impression of a sporadic and unplanned penetration of central Perthshire. The inference is that the upper reaches of the Tay and the Earn were already occupied and that in spite of the attractive farming terrain bordering the Earn east of Crieff the Beaker people had no incentive, perhaps even a positive deterrent, to the colonisation of this part of the country.

An Appendix to the Lundin Farm excavation report listed over twenty pairs of standing stones in Central Perthshire. Paired stones can no longer be regarded as the last vestiges of stone circles but are monuments in their own right. The Perthshire survey brought out two characteristics. One was a tendency to be paired broad and narrow. The other was that pairs thought to be typologically late because of size or siting, instead of being aligned with their broad faces in the same plane, were turned to face each other. Recently as a result of excavation to restore a fallen pair of

Paired Stones at Dalchirla, near Muthill.

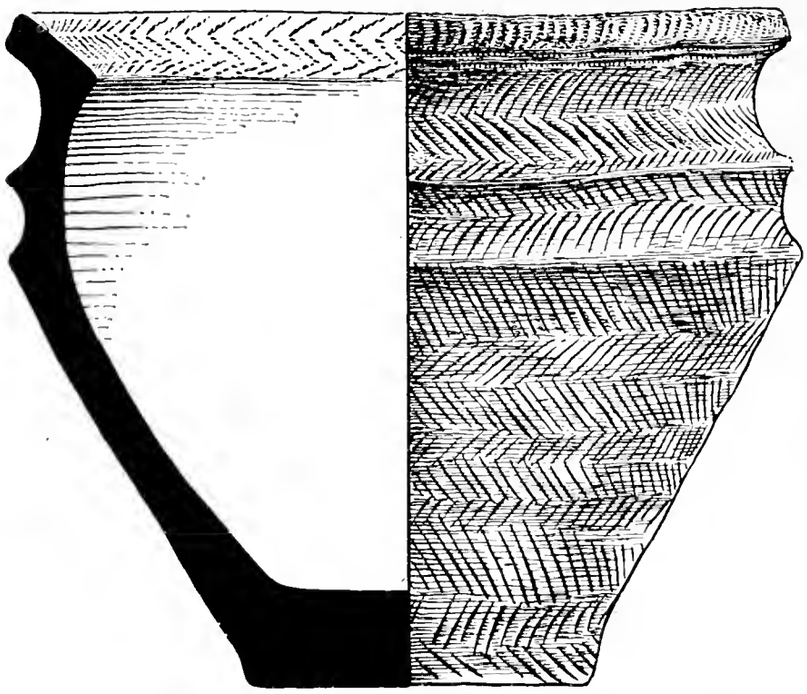
stones at Orwell in Kinross-shire[23] Dr. Graham Ritchie of The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments has suggested that paired stones might be a final memory of the flankers which stand on either side of the recumbent stone in the circles of north-east Scotland. The suggestion is important because it can be linked to three other hitherto puzzling phenomena in Perthshire. The first is a tendency in certain Perthshire stone circles to emphasise the south-west quadrant by placing the tallest stones on that part of the circumference. This is a feature of the Clava type of chambered tomb as well as of certain ring cairns and recumbent stone circles of the north-east. In Perthshire it was first recognised at Scone Wood[24] where one of two tangential circles was excavated in 1962. Since then it has been noted in the Moncrieffe and Monzie stone circles and in a recently recognised circle near the Loch of the Lowes near Dunkeld. The second puzzling phenomenon is that so-called " flat rimmed " pottery which is at home in the north-east has turned up at Scone Wood. The third phenomenon is the " four poster." This very appropriate name was coined by Dr. Coles to describe settings of four upright stones which couldn't strictly be classed as stone circles. In a recent paper to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne[25] Mr. Aubrey Burl has argued for their origin in the north-east of Scotland. There are several in Central Perthshire; at Auchnafree in Wester Glenalmond, at Lundin Farm and below Dull in Strathtay, on the moor above the north side of Loch Tummel with an eastern outlier at Glenballoch near

Craighall Rattray. In some distribution maps prepared by Mr. Herbert Coutts formerly of The City Museum, Dundee[26] paired stones and four poster settings occur in the valleys of the Isla and the South Esk as though the southward movement suggested by these Perthshire phenomena had followed the Vale of Strathmore. It all looks like an influx of new people into the valleys of the Tay and the Earn by the second half of the second millennium B.C. The Scone Wood stone circle has a Carbon 14 date of 1200 B.C.

Another influence on Central Perthshire in the second millennium B.C. is associated with the presence of bell barrows. These occur on the Haugh below Pitlochry[27], at Fortingall[28] and on flat moorland east of the village of Kinloch Rannoch[29]. The bell barrow is a circular burial mound surrounded by a ditch with an outer bank, the ditch separated from the mound by a flat berm. They must have been built by people who were either in touch with or were influenced by the Wessex culture of Southern England. Further indications of these people are the collared urns from Lundin and Dull, the former with its plaited cord ornament having affinities in south-west England. Because of their widespread trading connections the power and prestige of the Wessex hegemony must have been felt far beyond its physical boundaries. Trade in Irish gold may have encouraged Irish prospectors to visit Western Scotland in search of metal ores and it would have been easy to follow the routes eastward which had earlier been pioneered by the builders of chambered tombs. Gold and copper occur in Strath Earn, Strath Tay and Glen Quaich[30].

In the recent Beaker Pottery Corpus, David Clarke has drawn attention to what has for many years been known as the Balmuick beaker[31]. Balmuick is a farm north of Comrie. Clarke has dismissed this curious handled urn with its ribbed decoration from his beaker lists and claims it is in fact a clay replica of the famous gold cup from Rillaton in Cornwall[32]. Quoting a second parallel this time between handled clay urns from Monquhitter in Aberdeenshire and Gulval in Cornwall Clarke suggests they reflect a trade in Cornish tin. It is perhaps apposite to point out that on the moorland above Balmuick cup marks have been made on a large number of boulders and rock outcrops. It lends point to Stuart Piggott's suggestion that these markings are a magic formula for locating copper and tin and gold[33].

Evidence for settlement towards the close of the second millennium has come to light since this paper was read and should be included here to bring the record up-to-date. A cemetery of ten short cists at Almondbank produced two food vessels from differing traditions and two simple jet necklaces. The site should be compared with what remained of a similar group of burials at Tulliemet



Yorkshire type food vessel from Tulliemet, Ballinluig.

near Ballinluig. These yielded an Irish bowl food vessel and one, possibly two of Yorkshire type. The fact that cremation and inhumation were found at both sites underlines the extent of the mixed traditions already shown by the pottery.

The early prehistory of Perthshire is emerging. What is needed is selective excavation to prove or disprove some of the hypotheses now being put forward.

* * *

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Roman "Signal Stations" on the Gask Ridge

Anne S. Robertson, Hunterian Museum

Introduction

The Gask ridge is the northern ridge of the valley of Strathearn, Perthshire. It rises from the Creel, or Innerpeffray ford of the River Earn, at about 100′ (30 m.) above sea level, to a maximum height of c. 470′ (143 m.).

Along this ridge a Roman road ran slightly north of east for a distance of 8 miles. Earlier observers traced several stretches of this road, noted widths varying from 10′ (3 m.) to 24′ (7.3 m.), and remarked that at some points it was raised on a causeway[1].

More recently, O. G. S. Crawford has followed and recorded the line of the Roman road eastwards from the fort of Strageath on the west bank of the Earn[2], and the Ordnance Survey have marked it on their maps (e.g., 1″ No. 55). Within the last half dozen years or more, members of the Archæological Section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science have carried out frequent surveys of the line of the road, and have generously placed their knowledge at the disposal of visiting archæologists. No one who has had the privilege of walking along the Roman road on the Gask ridge under the guidance of members of the Archæological Section will forget the enlightening, thrilling experience, and the magnificence of the prospect to the north and south. The view northward in Roman times would have encompassed the Flavian fort of Fendoch with its small watch-post at the mouth of the Sma' Glen; the view southward would have included the fort of Ardoch and the "crag and tail" on which Stirling Castle now stands.

The Archæological Section have also cut a section across the Gask road in Parkneuk Wood (NN 915185) under the direction of Mr. James Thomson, Curator of the Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Stirling. The road had a maximum width of 19′ (5.25 m.), and was surfaced with a cambered layer of river gravel. A central rib 12′ (3.65 m.) wide, had been formed of boulders and large, flattish stones, over a layer of turves. On either side

of the central rib, stones had been embedded in a cambered layer of clayey-loam[3].

Earlier observers had also recorded several small circular earthworks on the line of the Gask ridge road[4]. Dr. David Christison did in fact list seven of these (now identified as at Parkneuk, Raith, Kirkhill, Muir o' Fauld, Gask House, Witch Knowe, and Moss-side or Findo Gask. " They are all," remarked Christison, " much alike in size and structure, the diameter over all averaging about 100′, and the plan showing an inner flat area, generally without any sign of a rampart or palisade at the edge, and a rather shallow trench, the spoil from which has been thrown outwards, forming a low mound."

Excavation was carried out in 1900 on five of the circular posts—Kirkhill (NN 967188), Muir o' Fauld (NN 981189), Gask House (NN 990191), Witch Knowe (NN 997195), and Moss-side (NN 007199). The plans of two only were published—Witch Knowe and Moss-side. At Witch Knowe four round post-holes were found nearly in the centre of the internal platform, which was 44′ (13.4 m.) across. Each post-hole was about 1.5′ (.46 m.) in diam., and 2′ (.61 m.) deep. The post-holes, measured from centre to centre, delimited a rectangular area c. 11′ (3.35 m.) from east to west by 9′ (2.74 m.) from north to south. Scraps of charred wood came from them. The post-hole area was encircled by a ditch about 14′ (4.27 m.) wide and 6′ (1.82 m.) deep, with an opening or causeway 6′ (1.82 m.) wide in the south side, facing the Roman road about 300′ (91 m.) away. Upcast from the ditch appears to have been thrown out on the outer side to form a low mound only 2′ (.61 m.) high.

At Moss-side, there was a level expanse in the centre about 22′ (6.15 m.) in diam. " In it, but not in the centre, were four ' post-holes ' in a square formation, with a base of 11′ (3.35 m.) measuring from the centres of the holes, but unlike the other works in which ' post-holes ' were found three of these holes were connected by flat cuts, probably to hold beams." The post-holes at Moss-side were over 2—2.5′ (.61—.76 m.) in diam., and over 3′ (.91 m.) deep. The circular interior, 22′ (6.15 m.) wide, was enclosed by a mound which in its surviving form was 14′ (4.27 m.) wide and 3′ (.91 m.) high, made up of layers, some black (which were probably turf). The outer encircling ditch was ploughed out, but there was an interruption in the rampart for a causeway, facing south towards the Roman road, c. 210′ (64 m.) away.

The other three circular posts which were excavated, but without published plans—at Gask House, Muir o' Fauld and Kirkhill—all lay to the south of the Roman road, at about 30′, 45′ and 150′ (9.1, 13.7 and 45.7 m.) distance south of it respectively. In each of the three, four post-holes were located, in each

case defining an area averaging 9′ (2.13 m.) square. At Kirkhill, the encircling ditch was 14′ (4.27 m.) wide, and 3′ (.91 m.) deep; at Gask it was again 3′ (.91 m.) deep.

A sixth circular post, at Raith (NN 932185), lying 300′ (91.4 m.) above sea level, and 600′ (183 m.) south of the Roman road, was discovered in 1901, during the construction of a water-tank. Four post-holes, each about 1′ (.31 m.) in diam., were found, going down about 1′ (.31 m.) into rock. They defined an area about 9′ (2.13 m.) square. A seventh circular post, at Parkneuk, also lay south of the Roman road, but was not investigated in 1900-1901.

Raith was the only one of the seven posts which produced pottery. " Some broken pieces of red pottery were also found, but not of a well defined character." These have not survived. From all six sites (i.e., all but Parkneuk, NN 916184) on which trenching took place fragments of charred wood were recovered, of oak, willow and hazel.

The conclusions reached by Dr. David Christison were as follows:

" That the posts are intimately related to the road is proved by their being aligned along and close to it, by their entrances being towards it whether they lie to the north or south of it, and by their identity of plan and structure. Their defensive strength as earth-works is but feeble, the trench being in all but one not more than $3\frac{1}{2}$′ deep, and the mound outside only a foot or two above the exterior. Neither did we find any evidence of a rampart or other defence round the inner area, except in No. 6 (i.e., Moss-side) which had a rampart 2′ or 3′ high, composed of layers of sod and clay. The key to their purpose appears to be the four post-holes found in the centre of the area of the five that we excavated, and which in all probability held the supports of wooden towers about 9′ to 10′ square. The thick layer of black mould over the whole inner area may have proceeded from the decay of other wooden structures as well as of the fallen towers, but no other holes or signs of foundations were found, although narrowly searched for. For defensive purposes the small supposed towers could have held very few men. It seems probable, therefore, that they were mainly watch-towers, and this purpose seems the more likely, as the post at Raith appears to have been intentionally placed further from the road than the others, in order to have the advantage of an extensive view[5]." Dr. Christison also discussed a large rectangular enclosure just south of the circular post at Gask which he identified as " no doubt Roman[6]."

Almost half a century later, O. G. S. Crawford described the course of the Gask ridge road, and its accompanying structures, in his *Topography of Roman Scotland North of the Antonine Wall*,

1949, 51 ff. By then, the number of " signal stations " identified had been increased to nine, through the discovery by Crawford himself of Ardunie (NN 946187) in 1937, and of Thornyhill, Midgate (NO 021204), in 1940. Ardunie is on the south side of the Roman road, Thornyhill on the north side.

Subsequently a tenth " signal station " on the Gask ridge was discovered from the air, by Dr. St. Joseph, to the north of the Roman road, on Roundlaw farm, between Ardunie and Kirkhill. Air photographs revealed a circular enclosing ditch, with the marks of four post-holes inside. A similar setting of post-holes within an encircling ditch was also observed on aerial photographs of Moss-side[7].

Dr. St. Joseph also recorded the re-discovery of the Roman camp at Gask, south of the " signal station." It measured *c.* 500′ (152 m.) from east to west, and *c.* 425′ (130 m.) from north to south. To the east of the most easterly " signal station " hitherto known (Thornyhill, Midgate), Dr. St. Joseph saw traces of the Roman road running eastwards, with, at almost 3000′ (915 m.) east of Thornyhill, a circular crop-mark similar in size to those at Roundlaw and Moss-side. This site (Westmuir) would have Thornyhill (Midgate) in view, although without outlook to the north. It may have been an eleventh " signal post." (See map, Fig. 1.)

A useful list of ten posts from Parkneuk to Thornyhill (Midgate), with their distances apart was published by A. L. F. Rivet

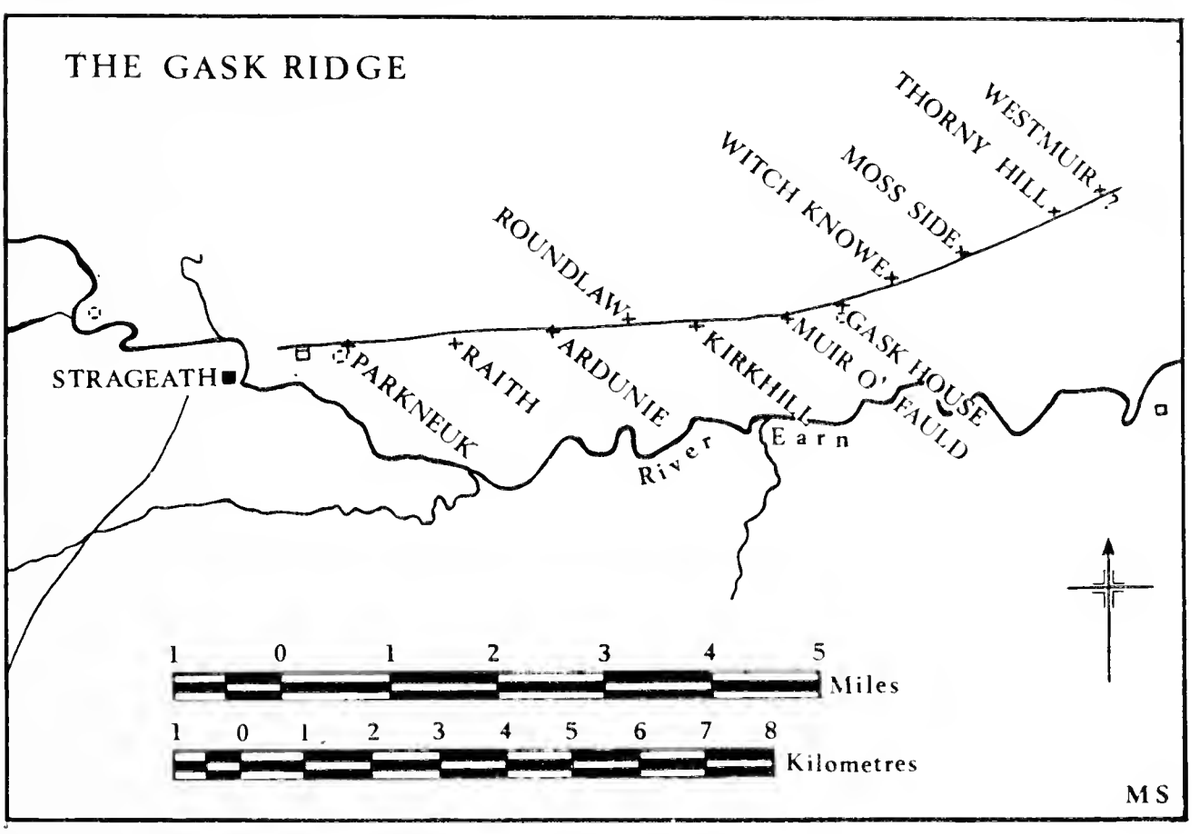


Fig. 1.

in *Arch. J.* 1964, 196 ff. His distances vary slightly from those given by the Archæological Section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, and by some other field investigators, from Dr. David Christison (c. 1900) to Charles Daniels (c. 1970). In general, however, it may be said with confidence that (if our series is complete) no two such posts were less than half a Roman mile apart or much more than a Roman mile apart. The average distance was in fact about four-fifths of a Roman mile. They were all (or almost all) on high ground, and mutually intervisible.

1. Gask House

In 1965, the Archæological Section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science initiated a project to excavate or re-excavate at least one of the Gask ridge " signal stations " in the hope of finding dateable evidence. Gask House was the site chosen, since although it had been investigated briefly by Dr. Christison, further trenching near the ditch-end might, it was thought, bring to light some pottery or other dating material. Accordingly, in 1965, a trial trench was opened up, and further excavated in 1966, by kind permission of Major R. N. Jardine Paterson and Mrs. Jardine Paterson, of Gask, and with the sanction of the then Ministry of Public Building and Works. The work was supervised by Mr. James Thomson, Curator of the Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Stirling, and myself.

Since the ditch of the Gask " signal station " and the bank inside it were visible on the ground, a surface survey was first made, and a trench (T1), 4′ (1.22 m.) wide, was then laid out from the ditch near its end on the east side of the north causeway, southwards across the site. The trench[8], 80′ (24.4 m.) long, was aligned slightly askew to the presumed axis of the signal post in the hope of locating at least one of the internal post-holes. A post-hole was in fact found in Trench 1, and two other smaller trenches (T3 and T4) revealed two other post-holes. All three were over 2′ (.61 m.) in diam., and went down 2′ (.61 m.) into subsoil. Charred wood and some packing stones were present in each, and in two, in Trenches 1 and 4, there was a flat stone on the bottom. The presumed position of the fourth post-hole has been dotted in on the plan (Fig. 2).

These four holes must have held the four great corner posts of a wooden tower, whose dimensions may be given as about 10′ (3.05 m.), from east to west, and 8′ (2.44 m.) from north to south. It depends of course on whether measurements are taken from centre to centre of the post-holes, or from their inner or outer edges.

The post-hole first found in the 80′ (24.4 m.) Trench 1 was partly under the east side of the trench, so that a small trench (T1e)

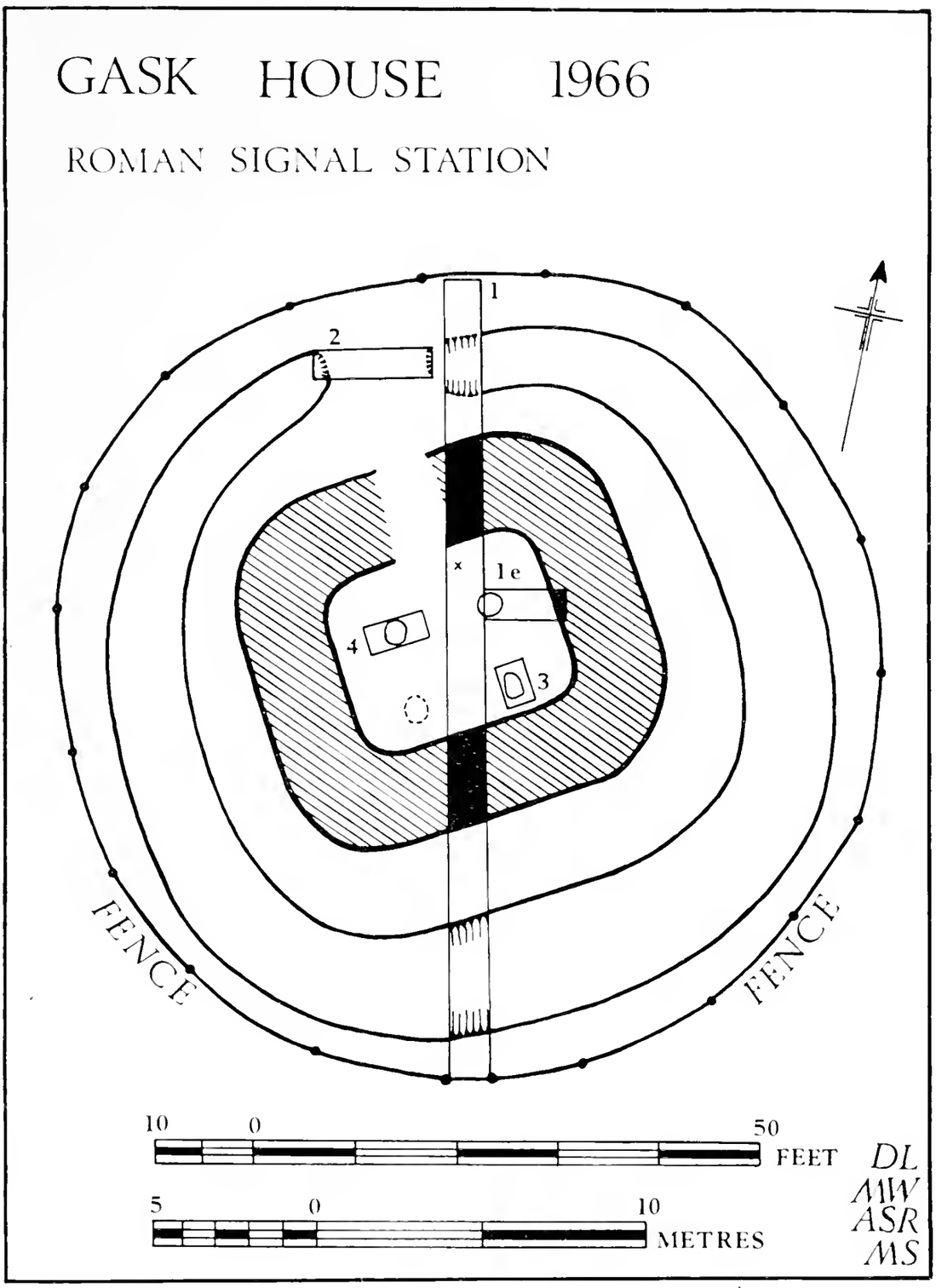


Fig. 2.

was cut eastwards to reveal the entire post-hole. The eastern tip of Trench 1e located the inner edge of the encircling bank, and established a point on its circuit.

Trench 1 also of course revealed the remains of the bank. It was 9′ (2.74 m.) wide, and had a layer of turf at the bottom, and clay upcast from the ditch above. The turf had been laid and presumably represented stripping of the surface before the ditch was dug. The bank, with its turf underlay, survived to a height of only 1′ (.3 m.).

At the north end of Trench 1, the bank was evidently coming to an end within the width of the trench, and had run out altogether on the south-west side of the trench. The points established on the inner and outer edges of the bank, and the position of the four post-holes indicate that the area enclosed by the bank was not circular, but rectangular with rounded corners. It measured 22′ (6.7 m.) from east to west, and 18′ (5.49 m.) from north to south. Within this sub-rectangular area the wooden tower framed by the post-holes was set back from the centre, leaving a space of about 2′ (.61 m.) between the two southerly post-holes and the bank, and about 5′ (1.52 m.) between the two northerly post-holes and the bank. Such a position would provide more space for men entering and leaving the tower.

The encircling ditch on the other hand was shown by its visible Trench 1 to have been more nearly circular, with east and west sides somewhat flattened. It was roughly V-shaped. Its depth averaged about 3′ (.9 m.) from the top of the clay subsoil. Its greatest width was on the south side—11′ (3.35 m.)—while its width on the east and west sides was about 9′ (2.7 m.), measured on the surface. It narrowed to 6′ (1.8 m.) in the section at the north end of Trench 1. The ditch was clearly beginning to run out at the north end of Trench 1, and its precise ending was located in an east-west trench (T2) cut across the visible causeway between the ditch-ends. The causeway (or more accurately the strip of ground left undisturbed when the ditch was dug) was less than 9′ (2.7 m.) wide. There were some stones trampled into the surface of the causeway and on the ditch-edges. There was natural silting in the ditch.

The axis of the " signal station " is shown by the position of the post-holes, and by the gaps in mound and ditch, to have been slightly west of north. It was, in other words, tilted north-west, as if to face roughly in the direction of the fort and watch-post at the mouth of the Sma' Glen.

The finds were scanty in the extreme—only a few flecks of charred wood, three iron nails (much corroded), and a mortarium rim. (Fig. 3, drawn by Mrs. Margaret Scott.) This was found unstratified in dark soil about 2′ (.61 m.) behind the bank in Trench 1 (at a point marked X). Fortunately the mortarium was of a distinctive type. Mrs. Katharine Hartley most kindly supplied the following note on it:

" The Gask mortarium is particularly useful as both date and origin are beyond doubt. It is in every way a typical Flavian product of the extensive potteries near Watling Street, in the area south of Verulamium, and including Brockley Hill and Radlett. The rim-form can be most clearly matched in the work of Albinus and it could well be one of his products, especially as he made more

mortaria than any contemporary potter. His activity can be dated *c.* A.D. 70-95, and there can be no doubt that the Gask mortarium was made within this period."

Fig. 3: Mortarium rim. Drawn by Mrs. Margaret Scott. Scale 1/1.

2. Parkneuk

Although the mortarium rim from Gask House provided a Flavian date for that site, it still seemed advisable to secure more dating evidence from the Gask ridge. Accordingly, in 1968, a small-scale excavation was carried out at Parkneuk, the most westerly " signal station " known.

At Parkneuk, trenching was once again under the direction of Mr. James Thomson and myself, with help from Dr. John Mackenzie, now at the University of Lancaster, and with a digging force of four Sixth-Formers from Daniel Stewart's College, Edinburgh, and of several indomitable members of the Archæological Section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science. Parkneuk lies in woodland owned by the Forestry Commission, which readily gave permission for excavation, and much assistance, greatly appreciated. Sanction was again given by the then Ministry of Public Building and Works.

The encircling ditch, and a bank inside it, were (and still are) visible on the ground, although both have been much distorted by tree-roots, and the ditch choked with reedy growth and part-filled with water. A surface survey was therefore made, and then a trench (T1), 80′ (24.4 m.) long and 4′ (1.22 m.) wide was laid out north-south at the one point where it could be directed right across the site from ditch to ditch without striking a tree. In the end, one tree-stump did cause an interruption 6.5′ (1.98 m.) long, at 12.5′ (3.81 m.) from the north end of Trench 1 (Fig. 4).

Trench 1 showed the ditch to have been V-shaped, and 12′ (3.66 m.) wide, but its precise depth could not be determined, owing

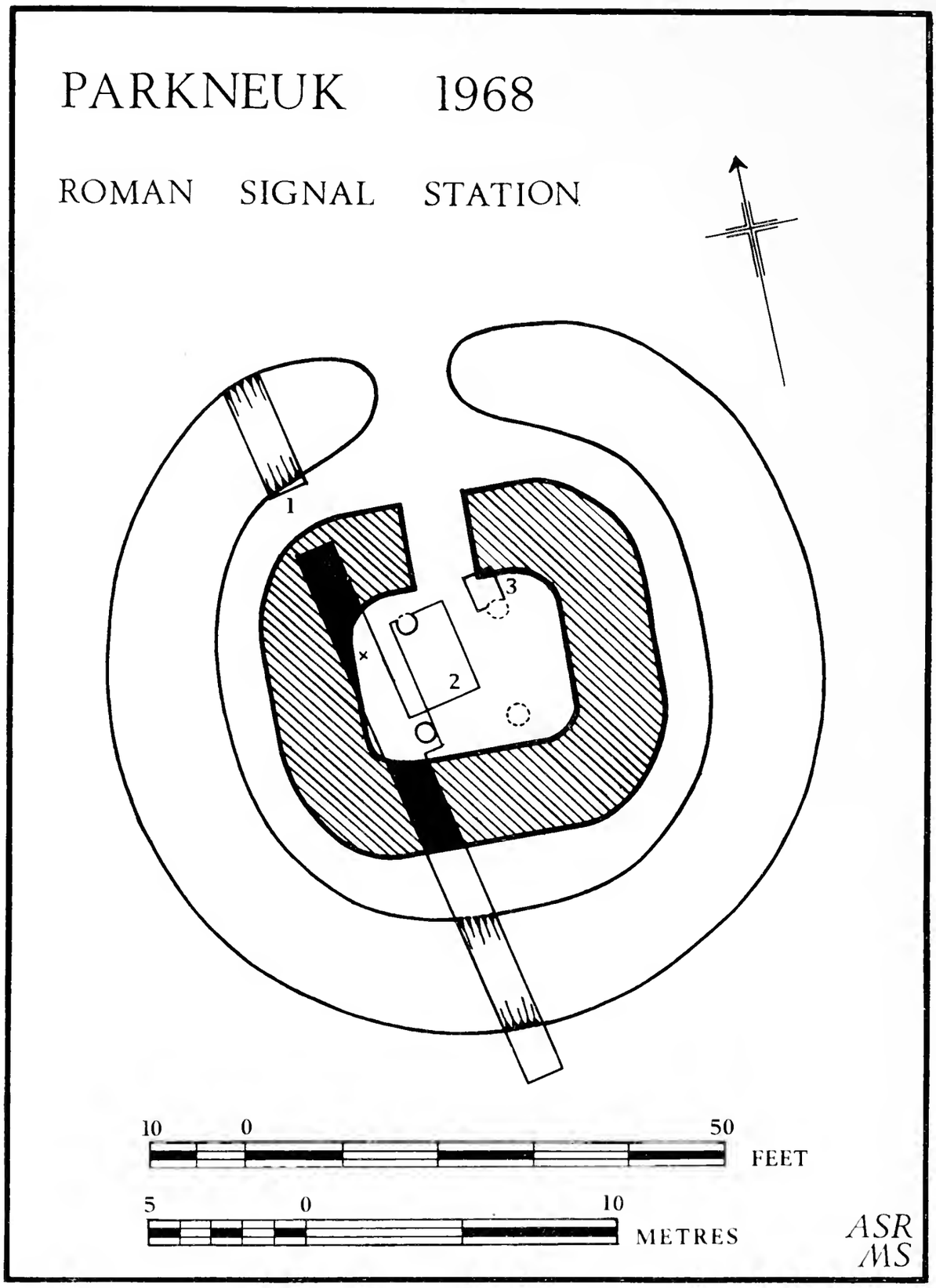


Fig. 4.

to its waterlogged state. It was probably 3′—4′ (.9—1.2 m.) deep. There was a causeway, 8′ (2.44 m.) wide, visible in the north side of the ditch. The ditch enclosed an area nearly circular, but with east and west sides slightly flattened.

Trench 1 also revealed the remains of a bank on the inner side of the ditch, formed mainly of red clay upcast from the ditch.

It was 9′ (2.74 m.) wide, and appeared to have been laid directly on the subsoil or on Roman humus. In the southern sector of Trench 1, the south bank was found to have its south edge straight, not curved. The inner edge of the south bank curved round slightly, and here there were several layers of turf, as if turf had been stripped off the surface and laid at the rear line of the proposed bank.

Since Trench 1 had had to be laid out askew to the north-south axis of the " signal station," in order to avoid trees, it picked up the south bank, part of the west bank, the curve at the north-west corner, and the north bank. The material of the bank at all points examined was of red clay upcast from the ditch. At the point where the inner edge of the west bank was encountered, there had apparently been a hollow in the subsoil (X), which had been filled (or had filled naturally), with grey-white clay before the red clay bank had been put down.

An eastward projection of Trench 1 disclosed one post-hole, about 2′ (.61 m.) in diam., and going down at least 1.25′ (.38 m.) into the subsoil. A continual inrush of water made it impossible to reach the bottom. In Area 2, a second post-hole was found, and a third in Trench 3. These were also 2′ (.61 m.) in diam., and went down at least 1.6′ (.53 m.) into the subsoil. The presumed location of a fourth post-hole has been dotted in.

Trench 3 also located the tip of the clay bank on the south-east side of the entrance gap, and part of the entrance causeway. The opening in the clay bank was 7′ (2.13 m.).

To judge from the four post-holes which must have held the corner posts of a wooden tower, the tower was about 10′ (3.05 m.) from east to west, and 11′ (3.35 m.) from north to south. These measurements were taken from centre to centre of the post-holes.

The tower had stood within a level area measuring 22′ (6.71 m.) from east to west, and 18′ (5.49 m.) from north to south. This area was sub-rectangular, enclosed by a bank or rampart which apparently had four short straight sides and rounded corners. Unlike Gask House, the Parkneuk tower stood almost centrally within the bank. There was only 2′ (.61 m.) between the Parkneuk tower and the north and south banks, but 5′ (1.52 m.) between the tower and the east and west banks. The plan gives the impression that the Parkneuk " signal station " was tilted slightly west of north like that at Gask House, but in fact the axis was almost due north, facing directly towards Fendoch.

There were no Roman finds (except minute scraps of charred wood) from Parkneuk, but its plan is virtually a blueprint of the Gask House plan. The two must have been contemporary, that is, of Flavian date.

A surface find of flint has been described as follows by Dr. E. W. MacKie, Hunterian Museum:

" The fragment is part of a large waste blade of white-patinated flint which has been struck from a prepared core: the striking platform and the bulb of percussion are visible as also are, on the opposite surface, the scars of previously struck blades. There is no sign of secondary working so the flint is not an implement. It has been severely heated after being detached from the core: thermal fractures are visible on all the faces.

" It is not possible to give the flint an accurate cultural context or date, since flint working of this type was practised in Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Early Iron Age times in Scotland."

3. Roundlaw

In 1972, opportunity offered itself of conducting a small-scale excavation at Roundlaw, since the field in which it stood was in that year under pasture. Permission was kindly given by the owner, Sir James Denby Roberts, Strathallan Castle, and by the tenant, Mr. J. Burt, Roundlaw Farm. The week's work was directed by Dr. John Mackenzie, University of Lancaster, and myself, with help from Miss Kay Docherty (Hunterian Museum), Miss Gillian Gibson (St. Andrews University), Graham Magauran, M.A. (Glasgow University), Gordon Thomas (Edinburgh University), and members of the Archæological Section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science and of the Strathearn Archæological Society. Roundlaw was not scheduled at the time of the excavation—September, 1972—but has since been scheduled.

The aerial photograph supplied by Dr. St. Joseph showed a circular ditch with an opening to the south, and apparently four post-holes inside[9]. (Figs. 5, 6.) There are no surface indications whatsoever.

The first trench laid out at Roundlaw was sited a little too far west, since the " signal station " proved to have stood a little way down the slight eastern slope of a small hump, instead of on the highest part of it[10].

Trench 2, however, 84′ (25.7 m.) long and 4′ (1.22 m.) wide, soon revealed the west ditch and, as it progressed, the east ditch of the " signal station." The site was of solid rock, and since the excavation followed several weeks of drought, the digging of this " signal station " was the hardest physical work yet required on the Gask ridge.

The reward came with the clearing out of the ditches in Trench 2. They were not the conventional V-shaped ditches, but were of the " Punic " type, that is, there was an almost vertical drop on the outer side, or counterscarp, while the inner side or scarp sloped gently upwards from a narrow, flat bottom. The ditches sectioned in Trench 2 were 7′ (2.13 m.) wide, and had been hacked down to a depth of over 4′ (1.22 m.) into the solid rock.

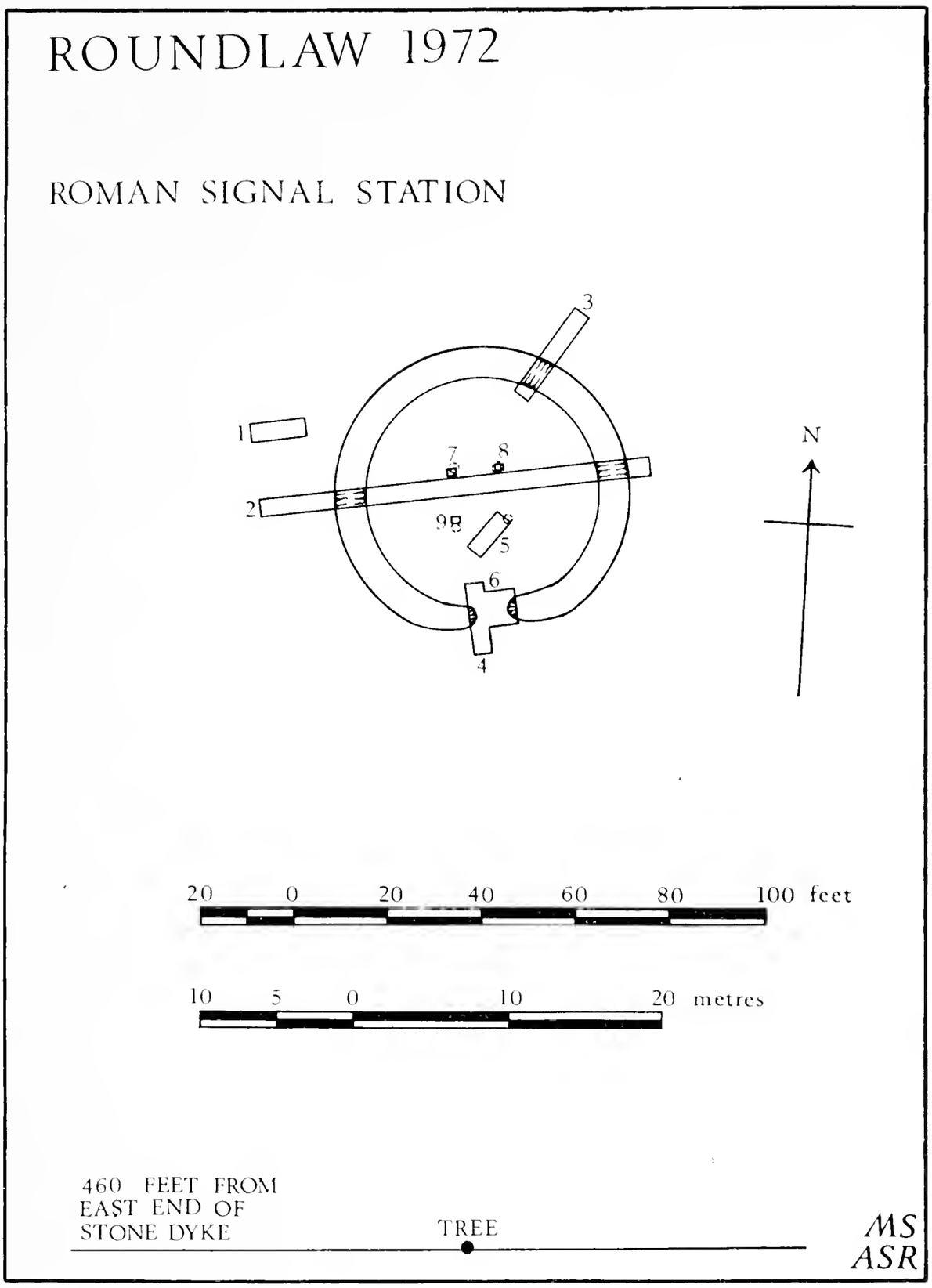


Fig. 5.

The west and east ditches located in Trench 1 were 47.5′ (14.5 m.) apart, and in the space between them there was no sign of a bank *in situ*. The rock surface was only about 8″ (.20 m.) under the surface, and the plough in its work over the centuries must have skimmed off the upper part of any bank that had been present.

The nature of the bank was, however, made clear by material in the east ditch. There was natural silting in the bottom to a maximum depth of 2′ (.61 m.), and above that fallen turf which had evidently slipped into the ditch from a bank to the west of it. The west ditch in Trench 1 contained no turf slip, only natural silting. The reason for this was the slight slope in the ground from west to east, which allowed material to slip eastwards, but not westwards.

The use of turf for the bank of Roundlaw " signal station " was made necessary by the unsuitable nature of the material dug out of the solid rock in making the ditch. This material must have been in the form of rubble and small stones, which would make a very unsatisfactory, unstable bank. The bank must either have had turf cheeks retaining a central core of rubble, or else have been formed entirely of turf stripped from the surrounding area.

The perimeter of the encircling ditch was further determined in Trench 3, to the north-east of Trench 2. A well-preserved " Punic " ditch-section was again revealed, with the expected width,

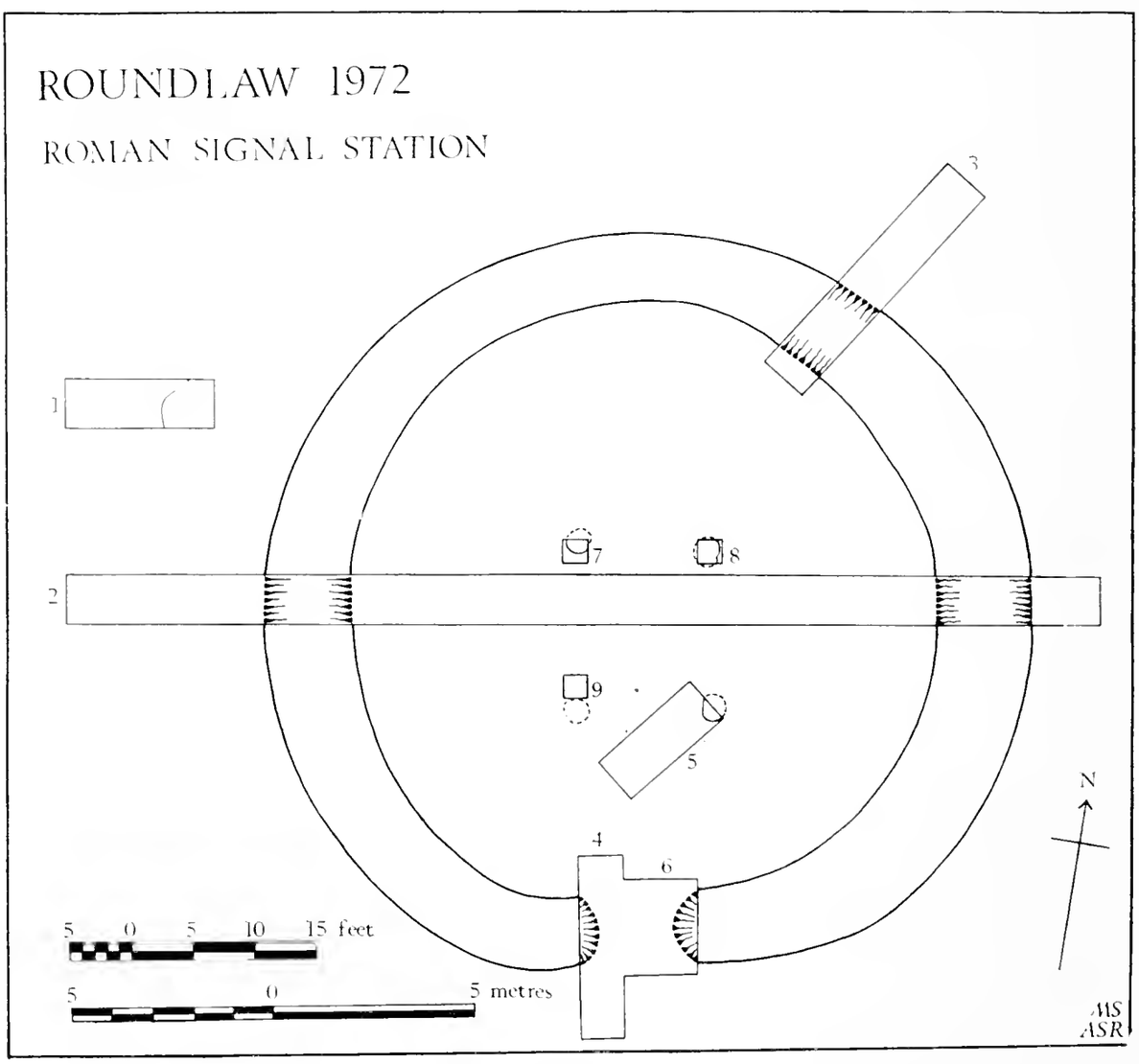


Fig. 6.

7′ (2.13 m.) and depth, 2′ (.61 m.). Natural silting filled the lower 2′ (.61 m.) of the ditch, and above that there was fallen turf, and earth with flecks of turf, the latter from wash-down into the ditch.

The interruption in the south side of the ditch for a causeway was located in Trenches 4 and 6. The sharp " Punic " outline was perfectly preserved quite close to the ditch-end on the east side of the causeway, and there were turf flecks in the dark earth silting of both ditch-ends. The causeway was only 6′ (1.83 m.) wide.

No post-holes were present in the main long trench (T2), but three were found in Trench 5, south-east of Trench 2, and two others in two small squares (T7 and T8) cut on the north side of Trench 2. Yet another trench (T9) just missed a fourth post-hole which must have been located beyond the southern edge of Trench 9.

Since they had been chipped out of solid rock, the post-holes were not of the conventional round shape, but had very jagged edges. They were all about 2′ (.61 m.) across, and probably 2′ (.61 m.) deep.

The wooden tower whose four corners were marked by the post-holes seems to have been 10′ (3.05 m.) wide from east to west, and as much as 14′ (4.27 m.) long from north to south, measuring from centre to centre of the post-holes. The tower in that case stood much closer to the south ditch (i.e., on the causeway side), the distance being about 14′ (4.27 m.) than to the north, east and west ditches, the distance in these cases being about 17′ (5.18 m.). No evidence was recovered for the width of the encircling bank, but it may have been about 9′ (2.74 m.) wide, as at Gask House and Parkneuk.

Roundlaw " signal station " would have had Fendoch in view had the outlook been to the north, but in fact it faced south over Strathearn. It stood about 140′—150′ (42—46 m.) north of the Roman road[11]. Presumably its southward link was with Ardoch, or with other stations on the Roman road running south from Strageath past Kaims Castle to Ardoch.

The only finds from Parkneuk were a few tiny flake and quartz chips, wood scraps and iron nails. The two last came from the two northern post-holes.

Summary

There have been identified on the Gask ridge, average height 200′—300′ (60—90 m.) above sea level, at least ten Roman " signal stations," set on the line of a Roman road running eastwards along the ridge from the fort at Strageath in the direction of Perth, 14 to 15 miles away. These ten " signal stations " cover the eight miles east from Strageath, leaving a gap over six miles long between the most easterly of them (Thornyhill, Midgate) and Perth.

It is, however, possible that an eleventh " signal station " may be identified at Westmuir, over half a mile east of Thornyhill, Midgate, where a circular crop mark has been observed from the air. This mark is similar to the circular ditch round the certain " signal stations," for example, at Moss-side and Roundlaw.

The ten certain " signal stations " took the form of wooden towers, averaging 10′ (3.05 m.) square, probably with upper floors, and a flat roof, or a balcony round the top storey from which signals could be sent. The total height may have been not less than 20′ (6.1 m.).

Each tower was enclosed by a bank consisting mainly of material dug out of the encircling ditch. Although the ditch is circular on plan, or on an air photograph, the bank may have flattened sides, so following the rectilinear outline of the tower rather than the circle of the ditch.

Each " signal station " had one entrance-causeway, facing towards the Roman road. The distance from the road varied from c. 30′ (9 m.) at Gask House to c. 600′ (183 m.) at Raith. In each case the site had apparently been chosen to give an uninterrupted view from one " signal station " to the two on either side.

Six " signal stations " stood on the south side of the road, and four on the north side. Most of them had in view the fort and " signal station " at Fendoch at the mouth of the Sma' Glen, and possibly the fort at Ardoch.

The only dateable evidence from the Gask ridge itself is a mortarium rim of unequivocal Flavian date from Gask House. The similarity in plan of the ten known " signal stations " places the whole system in the period.

The fort at Strageath had several phases of occupation, one of which at least is known to have been Flavian[12]. The earliest fort at Ardoch was of Flavian date. The temporary camp at Dornock[13], over a mile up the River Earn from Strageath, and the camp south of the " signal station " at Gask House[14] are of a small size and therefore perhaps more likely to be of Flavian than of later date. On the other hand, the two camps west and south of Parkneuk[15], and the camp at Broomhill-Forteviot, south-east of Thornyhill, Midgate[16], are of the larger size, possibly assignable to Severus' campaigns[17].

In any case, the Gask ridge was in use at some time during the Flavian period, but at what point within that period is not determined. From the fort at Strageath a substantial road ran eastwards towards Perth, and ultimately to the legionary fortress at Inchtuthil, and the auxiliary forts at Cardean and Stracathro. The Gask ridge sector of this road (and it may be other stretches of the road) was studded with wooden watch-towers each set within a bank and

encircling ditch. They were intervisible, and also had a wide outlook to north and south as well as along the Roman road. Each could have held a few men only, whose base must have been at a permanent fort, perhaps Strageath, and whose function must have been to maintain a patrolling watch or look-out. They could also have received and sent on signals. Whether or not the Gask ridge can be correctly designated a *limes*, as has been suggested in recent times, the name " signal station " given to the small, circular posts 75 years ago may be allowed to stand.

* * *

References

1. R. Sibbald, *Historical Inquiries concerning Roman Antiquities in Scotland*, 1707, 37; T. Pennant, *Tour in Scotland*, 1772, Vol. II, 1776, 90; D. Christison, " Excavations Undertaken by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland of Earthworks Adjoining the ' Roman Road ' between Ardoch and Dupplin," *PSAS*, 1901, 15 ff., hereafter referred to as Christison.
2. *Topography of Roman Scotland North of the Antonine Wall*, 1949, 51 ff.
3. *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland, 1967*, 37; more detailed publication forthcoming.
4. *PSAS*, 1898, 433 f.; Christison, 25 ff.
5. Christison, 39 f.
6. Christison, 41.
7. *JRS*, 1955, 87; 1965, 81 f.
8. The site had been enclosed at some time by a fence, and privately planted with young trees. These have since grown so thickly that the " signal station " is now almost inaccessible.
9. *JRS*, 1955, 87; 1965, 81 f.
10. *JRS*, 1955, 87.
11. Not 240′ north of the road as stated in *JRS*, 1955, 87.
12. *JRS*, 1958, 90; *Discovery and Excavation, Scotland*, 1973, 42.
13. *JRS*, 1965, 81; 1973, 229.
14. *JRS*, 1965, 81 f.
15. *JRS*, 1958, 90.
16. *JRS*, 1965, 82.
17. *JRS*, 1969, 114 ff.; 1973, 230 ff.

PERTH
The first century of the burgh

A. A. M. Duncan

The period with which this paper deals is the middle century or so of three hundred years of expansion in the economy of western Europe. From about the year 1000 an increase in population was accompanied by a greater food production, a diversification of manufactories and an increasing specialisation of function which made available to both peasant and landlord a wider range of goods more expertly produced. An economic and social phenomenon of this kind can know no national boundaries and those who would seek to write the history of Scotland without taking account of such economic developments are likely to misrepresent the society as more unique than it really was and to give it the curiously old-fashioned look of a set of institutions without people. In the twelfth century the pace of expansion quickened and took an even more dramatic upturn about the year 1180. One marked feature of this period of change in both England and France was the development of towns as increasingly busy centres of trade and manufacture. In Scotland we may seem to be much disadvantaged by the absence of good evidence for urban life in the first half of the twelfth century; it is indeed the case that there is no charter making a grant to the burgesses of a burgh earlier than the 1160s in date, but the many surviving grants to religious houses, monasteries or cathedrals, show that burghs were in existence at Berwick and Roxburgh before 1124 and at various other places, including Perth, not long after that date[1]. The absence of early twelfth-century charters to burghs is attributable not to their being lost but to the fact that the town had no legal persona to receive a charter. Within it there were burgesses paying their rents to the king's representative, the sheriff or to his agents, the grieves or provosts. The king created a burgh when he recognised that the inhabitants of the town were burgesses, enjoying the personal liberties associated with that term, but most importantly the right to devise their property, whether moveable or landed; but there was no one to whom he might give a charter (which was the record of the act of creation but not the act itself). I take my stand

then with those who regard David I as the creator of many burghs in the sense that he gave the privileges necessary for the further development of urban life on these particular spots though not by charter. It is the purpose of this paper to see how far we can draw a profile of Perth in the century after David I mentions its existence, say from 1130 to 1230, but I shall not hesitate while doing so to indicate how the missing lines might run on the analogy of urban history elsewhere. The first and much the most important of these uncertain lines is the earliest development of the town.

Throughout western Europe it is usual to find towns, and especially those towns which flourish, at nodal points of communications. They may also be beside a fortified place or a large religious establishment but it is usually an open question whether the routes attracted the abbey or castle, or *vice versa*. In Scotland early roads led to the castles built on such natural rocks as Edinburgh and Stirling, at the latter of which there was an important river crossing. At Inverkeithing the routes from East Fife and Perth met before crossing the Forth by the Queen's Ferry. At Montrose there was a ferry to cross the mouth of the basin. At all these places and at many others where burghs were granted, an intersection of routes, and especially water borne and land routes, was clearly of great importance in encouraging the growth of a settlement. Now we may accept the silence of the sources about settlements at these places before the time of David I and argue that they were created by him *de novo* as towns as well as burghs. On the other hand, we may notice that there *are* no sources before the reign of David I, or at least none of Scottish origin, and that therefore silence about these places argues nothing at all. When we do hear of them it is because the religious are anxious to obtain houses within their bounds and the patronage and profits of the churches associated with them, a fact which is best explained if they were already flourishing towns when they became burghs, with a history of some decades, if not centuries, behind them. At least when we are writing of urban origins we should distinguish between the town which is a settlement and a way of life on the one hand, and the burgh which is an agglomeration of privileges designed to further that way of life, on the other. It must surely be plain that David I did not choose the spots and create the communities *ab initio* like so many twentieth-century new towns.

The picture of Scotland as a country held down by royal castles garrisoned by sheriffs intent in protecting imported merchants in fortified burghs is a curiously unreal way of explaining the coincidence of towns, castles and sheriffs. The fact is that the sheriff was a demesne agent of the king, responsible for the collection, storage, consumption and sale of produce from the king's estates in a certain province. His castle was the security point for housing produce-rents and was probably also a royal hall

and kitchen. And because the king was a sensible man who knew that he would have surplus produce to sell and a need for skilled manufacturers, he placed his hall, castle and sheriff at the place, be it natural harbour, ford or bridge, where there was a community specialising in production, selling and buying. In early urban history town and castle were mutually attracted.

The twelfth-century kings resided frequently at Scone, an ancient cult centre with a new abbey. At Perth they had a house and a castle, and although there is no direct statement to this effect it is highly probable that abbey and town acted complementarily as a royal centre, a hall and palace to which the king's rents in produce were brought for the consumption of his court[2]. At Perth the river Tay became shallow enough to ford, while, at the same time, deep enough at high tide to bring in ships; it was the natural junction of land and sea routes and it is therefore not surprising that it appears by 1128 as a burgh whose church, already in existence, is granted away to the grasping Benedictines of Dunfermline abbey[3]. It may at first sight seem more surprising that this burgh seems to have yielded more in revenue than any other in Scotland. Yet even before David I became king, before, that is, Perth was recognised as a burgh, Alexander I told the merchants of England that the canons of Scone might have a custom-free ship to reach them without impediment at Scone[4]; it was a nice idea though difficult to carry out without deepening the river. It does at least show that by 1124 foreign traders were sailing up the Tay at least as far as Perth. Then in order to sustain his programme of monastic foundations David I had to give money for the initial monastic colonies, money taken from town revenues, but overwhelmingly from those of Perth, all the more surprising since the monasteries did not lie around the Tay. A mark to St. Andrews priory, then fifty shillings more, fifty shillings to Cambuskenneth abbey, sixty-six shillings to Dunfermline abbey, forty to the abbey of Tiron in France, and a hundred shillings to Holyrood[5]. Much of this came not from the burgh rents but from the customs charged on ships coming for business and breaking bulk—one ship yielding a notional fifty shillings custom. If perchance the ships did not come to Perth then the canons of Holyrood were to obtain their hundred shillings from the rent of Edinburgh, Perth and Stirling. Other burghs yielded rents, but Perth far outreached them in ship-customs. Such evidence implies that the Watergate of Perth (with the wharves along the river) was already in existence for some at least of its present length between High Street and South Street.

Behind it lay St. John's kirk, attested as early as 1128 not long before the chapel of the castle[6]. Each would lie in the place at which it is later found, on either side of the High Street, of which we have evidence when Baldwin the Fleming was given a small

piece of land, ten feet by twenty-four, next to the house of Uilchil. A few years later in the 1160s this passed to St. Andrews priory as "a booth in North Street at the castle," and so we can place it exactly at the intersection of High Street and Skinnergate[7]. The castle site is delineated by the Castle Gavel on early maps and stood roughly where the Art Gallery now is. Charters will take us a little further than this even in the twelfth century; to be precise a charter granted by King William to his new abbey of Arbroath about 1180, of a full toft outside the burgh of Perth as was perambulated (or, as we would say, demarcated) for them between two ports (i.e. town gates). They were to hold this with full rights to do business in Perth with the burgesses of Perth. Where was this toft and where the two ports? Some fifty years later it was evidently still outside the town between two ports but otherwise its history is obscure until 1330 when it emerges that the abbot's house in Perth had gone, perhaps destroyed in the war, and that he sought hostillage in the toft outside the burgh between two ports in a street called Merkarraw; this must be the same property as that described in 1414 in the Barkarraw outside the Turret (i.e. High Street) port and in 1456 "in the street outside the port and bridge called the Turret brig on the south side of the highway going from the port to St. Paul's chapel." In 1478 it lay "abune the Turretbrig betwix the land of Michael Lokart on the west part and the commone stank of the burgh on the est part[8]." The common stank and the Merkarraw or Barkarraw now lie beneath Methven Street, but this toft is as securely placed as any can be on the site now occupied by and to the south of St. Paul's kirk at the top of the High Street. Hence the two ports of Perth, the High Street port and South Street port, are firmly fixed as already in being by 1180, and with them the two streets. By that date the town not only had its two parallel main streets but also a degree of repletion—built-up area—sufficient to drive the king outside the walls for a holding large enough to meet the needs of his splendidly endowed monastery.

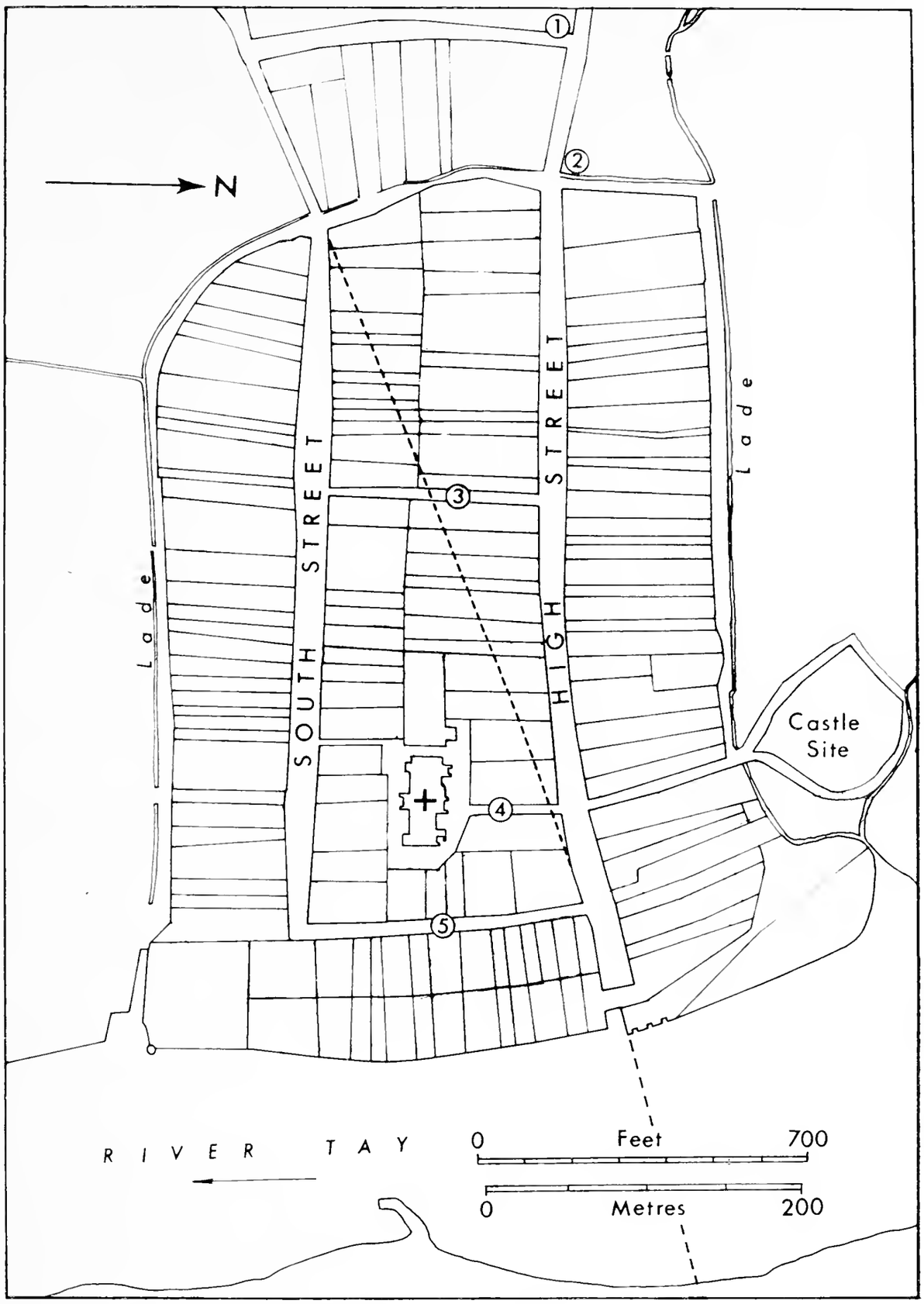
In my time I have been seduced by that other charter of King William, perhaps a little later in date, granting to Cambuskenneth abbey a toft in "my new burgh of Perth," and have looked for divisions within the town which may represent stages of its growth[9]. One is obvious: the High Street first, South Street second, but on the argument just presented this will hardly do for King William's time. Unfortunately, the toft of Cambuskenneth passes out of record and cannot be placed upon the map, but since the Arbroath toft was held in burgage even though outside the burgh, it seems most likely that the "new burgh" in which the Cambuskenneth toft lay was also this small suburb beyond the Turretbrig.

Charters, however, are not the only source which we can bring to bear on the problems of the early development of Perth. The

town itself as recorded before the alterations of the late nineteenth century and twentieth century preserves not merely the street plan, but also the divisions into holdings the boundaries of which would pass unchanged, except for sub-division, through the centuries. Rutherford's map of Perth is as much a document of King David's time as it is of 1774 when it was made. Of course, we must subtract new streets such as George Street, St. John's Street and Princes Street, but Skinnergate, Kirkgate and Watergate are all attested in documents from the 1220s and along with High Street and South Street they were there fifty or a hundred years earlier.

The striking thing about this Perth is surely its size. Small by modern standards it may be, but it was large enough to contain the population growth of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries; indeed its bounds were not really burst until the beginning of the nineteenth century. No doubt there were many open spaces within the precinct, but that the town existed on such a scale by 1180 is again a comment upon its early history for it is difficult to cram the earlier evolution of such an organism within a mere fifty years. Recently the critical work of earlier scholars in a number of fields has come under revision; nobody now believes that Scotland had one eleventh century bishopric and eight created by David I. Nobody believes that the stone castle was unknown till 1300 for thirteenth and even twelfth century examples are identifiable. Nobody believes that the resources and adminstrative structure of the monarchy were a novelty in the twelfth century though they certainly were being adapted. In their heart of hearts I doubt if anybody believes that David I created some eighteen towns and his successors many more, though the most that is admitted is antecedent village settlements. On the evidence of Perth, and I would add, Edinburgh and Dunfermline, the time has come to consider the eleventh century origins of towns in Scotland.

For instance, the plan of Perth presents intriguing problems. The communications of which Perth was a nodal point came from the south and the west, entered the town, crossed the river and turned northward. But whereas the old road from the west comes straight down the High Street, that from the south comes downhill from Station Square and approaches the old South Street port at an angle. The twelfth-century traveller entering the town there had to take a dog-leg course down South Street along the Watergate or the Meal Vennel and then cross the river before he could journey north. If, however, we take the line of the approach from the south and as it enters the town extend it across the town, it meets the width of the High Street somewhere about the Kirkgate at a point at which the High Street follows the same line by taking a slight curve to the north. The existence of a former road along the line just indicated, joining the High Street in a fork slightly to the west of Kirkgate is a matter of conjecture which could only be



PERTH. Based on Rutherford's map of 1774. The broken line represents the suggested pre-urban road-line, and the approximate line of the early ford and bridge. Key to figures: 1, St. Paul's Kirk. 2, Turret port and brig. 3, Meal Vennel. 4, Kirkgate and (between High St. and Castle) Skinnergate. 5, Watergate.

put to the test of excavation, but, to press speculation a little further, the diversion of such a road is likely to have taken place as the Watergate and east end of High Street became places of business and settlement, that is, as town life developed. The Watergate route offered an alternative approach to the ford or bridge for the road from the south but it would take royal approval to shift the road to the line of South Street.

It is also noticeable that the burgages on South Street form a continuous line between Watergate and Meal Vennel, so that there was no approach from the south to St. John's Kirk, or even more important, to the market place. The rigs of the south side of the High Street are longer between St. John's Kirk and Meal Vennel than they are to the west of Meal Vennel where the division of rigs between South Street and High Street is more nearly equal. Perhaps, therefore, the rigs to the east of Meal Vennel were laid out before South Street was settled, whereas those to the west of Meal Vennel were part of a careful allotment after South Street had come into occupation. These speculations indicate that the eleventh-century town was on the High Street between Meal Vennel and the Watergate with the castle outside to the north, with St. John's Kirk just within the town to the south, each linked by a spur-road to the High Street. Outside this town lay South Street, perhaps gradually subjected to suburban sprawl and so by 1180 fully settled along with the area to the west of Meal Vennel. In answering the question: when did this expansion take place? much depends on our view of how active the king's officers were in laying out a complete burghal site around a pre-existing nucleus by dividing it up into rigs for occupation. It could well be that a burgh was laid out on a generous scale by David I in the area to the west of Meal Vennel and to the south of South Street and that open ground was steadily cut up into rigs and occupied over the following fifty years. But whatever the correct interpretation of this difficult evidence, there can be no doubt that at the beginning of David I's reign there already existed along High Street and Watergate a flourishing urban community attracting merchants from overseas and traders and craftsmen to settle within the town itself.

The craft element in the early medieval town is perhaps the most elusive in the sources, but from incidental references in monastic and other charters a few more lines may be drawn which illustrate this part of the profile of Perth. Thus the abbey of Scone was allowed about 1160 to have three craftsmen, a smith, a skinner, and a tailor who while engaged on the abbey's business were to have the freedoms which the king's burgesses of Perth have in or out of Perth[10]. Notice the specialists whom the good abbot might employ: a worker with metal, with leather and with cloth; if you think about these, with pottery and wood they were the only materials available to medieval society, and leather in particular played a great part in manufactures and daily life. Leather kept

the rain off you, shod you, saddled your horse, made up your armour, held your drink and even cooked your food, and leather was produced in ample quantities by the cattle grazed in Scotland. Clothing was equally indispensable but the canons had no weaver or dyer, only a tailor to make up the finished product. Evidence for Edinburgh supports this account of the town as a place where specialists exercise their craft; division of labour is of the essence of a town; it implies exchange and therefore marketing and money. The market like the town was not a place of inter-regional trade alone, but also a place where humbler wares were produced and sold: it is possible to have trade without towns, but artisans and crafts are of the essence of towns.

Among a number of Flemings whom David I attracted to Scotland was one, Baldwin the lorimer who presumably came to make the trappings for the king's horses but who settled to urban life in Perth with the king's blessing. He bought a toft in the town and the king freed it of services except for the burgesses' duty of keeping watch and of closing off the end of his toft with a palisade so that the burgh as a whole was enclosed. He had to pay the king one terret and two horse collars, but he was free to sell up and leave when he liked[11]. A little later he was given the small piece of land to which I have already referred next to the house of Uilchil. It is tempting to people the burghs of Scotland with Flemings brought in by David I, but a moment's reflection will raise some doubts. If the burgesses we know of are Flemish this is because written titles and assurances were given to such settlers—but not to others—to persuade them to contribute their skills to Scotland's towns. Baldwin was a craftsman but his skills had a particular relevance to the king's court and castle and it should not surprise that his holding is described as " a toft in Perth with a booth in North Street *at the castle*," that is, at the intersection of High Street and Skinnergate.

A town like Perth exists then to serve, and to profit by, the needs of society as a whole, and while it lives by the rules necessary for a manufacturing and trading community, it is in no sense isolated from the countryside which supplies raw materials and food nor from the peasants and landowners who must buy within it. Many prelates had town houses in Perth from which to conduct the temporal business of their church and magnates may have had them also. King David I it has been pointed out had a castle and house there as well as nearby Scone abbey; his grandson's need was even greater.

In 1174 King William gambled on making war on the English king at a moment of difficulty for political concessions; the gamble failed miserably when William himself was taken prisoner and to buy his release had to acknowledge England as his overlord and to surrender three castles to English garrisons: Berwick, Roxburgh

and Edinburgh. In effect these three key places ceased to be available for the king, who however had many alternative castles and manors. What he did not have was much by way of alternative accommodation for those solemn or festive occasions of great importance for one reason or another to which were summoned the prelates and magnates of his realm. For prelates and magnates too had to be housed, with their families, servants and animals, and it was not always easy to do justice to the good opinion which a man had of himself in the accommodation which was available. Thus in April 1194 King William went to England to see Richard I. " And Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, and Hugh, bishop of Durham, went to Brackley, where the dwelling which he had had for thirty years past by allotment of the marshals of king Henry had been prepared for the bishop of Durham. And when his provision had been prepared the servants of the king of Scotland supervened, wishing to cast out the servants of the bishop; but they could not. Yet they bought the king's foods, and prepared them in a certain house of the same parish. And when the bishop of Durham had come thither, and it had been told him by his men that it had so chanced, he refused to retire, but boldly entered his dwelling, and ordered the tables to be served. And while he dined came Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, and offered him his dwelling; and counselled him that he should leave that dwelling to the king of Scotland, and depart. But when the king of Scotland had returned from hunting, late, and it had been announced to him that this had so befallen, he took it ill and refused to go thither, but commanded his provision to be given to the poor. And he himself went to the king at Selston, and complained to him of the wrong which the bishop of Durham had done him. And hence the king was much enraged, and reproved the bishop of Durham[12]."

Back in Scotland King William almost certainly had the same kind of troubles; the fact that his constable had a toft in every burgh shows where he was expected to find lodgings for most of the peripatetic court. But with three towns gone, the pressure on the rest increased. It cannot be said that the king's charters show him resident more frequently at Scone or Perth than at Stirling or Forfar, but they do show some large gatherings there. Bishops were chosen there, bishops who were not obvious curial promotions and were therefore the result of wider consultation. On Tuesday, 30th October, 1184, the king made an assize, a new law, at Perth, just as in 1177 he had made one at Aberdeen and in 1180 at Stirling. For this and other occasions an enlarged royal court was undoubtedly quartered upon the burgesses of Perth, and Perth became, to borrow a modern phrase, an acknowledged conference centre. It had no cathedral but in 1201 the papal legate held a church council there, in 1206 the bishop of St. Andrews a diocesan synod, and other church councils were held in later years; the

reason was the availability of Scone abbey to be squeezed for hospitality by the king, the legate or the bishop, and of Perth town houses to put up the rest. The burgesses of Perth must have made connections and contracts with the royal household which were much to their mutual benefit.

Long ago the great scholastic, John Major, in his history of Great Britain said that in Scotland there was only one walled town: Perth. In his own day that was untrue because Edinburgh at least was twice walled, and on Major's head has fallen the scorn of more than one scholar since; the walled medieval town is something of an article of faith with us though, as faith so often is, it seems to be grounded upon the experience of others and not of ourselves. For if we look at the footnotes to the article of faith the references are almost without exception to the burgh records of the fifteenth century, to the age, that is, of the cannon-ball and the English invader. And the same footnotes will point to the evidence that Inverness and Berwick had about 1180 and 1296 respectively, a palisade and ditch around them; but that is evidence against, not for, a stone wall. There are also references to the back-dykes of burghs with which the inhabitants closed off their rigs and so provided a continuous stockade around the town. In other words, like so much else of the supposedly medieval town, like John Knox's house, Provand's Lordship, the Fair Maid's House, the stone wall is a very late medieval phenomenon; Robert Bruce had an ill time taking the castles of Scotland one by one from the English but there is no suggestion that the towns were able to defy him—except Perth, of which Barbour says the walls were of stone, describing how Bruce himself carried a ladder across the ditch and was first upon the wall-head. This was in 1313, at least the second siege of the English in the town. John Major was right out of time: in the thirteenth century Perth *was* the only stone-walled town in Scotland (though it is possible that such walls existed at Roxburgh) and the reason is probably to be connected with another curious circumstance: according to the chronicler Bower, writing much later but well informed about these few years, in 1210—a mistake for the year 1209—King William had undertaken to pay a large sum of money to the English king, to raise which he called his magnates together to ask for taxation at Perth, at Michælmas. The weather broke, the rain fell in torrents, rivers burst their banks and especially the river Tay with the Almond. Destroying a certain "mountain," *mons*, it carried away various houses, the bridge, and an old chapel. King William and his brother sailed out of the town in a very little boat seeking dry land, and with them a very few of the magnates who were present. Other magnates who were in the town saved themselves as best they could, either in little boats or in the solars, the upstairs rooms, of the burgesses. Then the tide turning began to rise and the swollen river far from getting

away, surged through the streets of the town so that not only cobbles and boats but big ships could sail freely through streets and open spaces. The council was adjourned to Stirling where the king got his money.

The light which this episode throws upon the town itself is fascinating. It takes us into the very houses of the burgesses, and documents also tell us of their solars and their cellars; one document of 1219 confirms the seriousness of the flood: John Ylbaren sold to Scone abbey the toft, twenty feet by seventy, on the south side of the bridge next the Tay on the east, namely at the very top of the street, a toft which the canons of Scone had held before the great flood carried it away by violence and which John had been unable to build up again to its previous state because of the depth of the water. Another document of similar date gives us our last mention of the castle: Henry Bald the goldsmith of Perth sold to Scone abbey, "my two booths with the solar above, on the land which King William gave me, the two booths namely which are in front of the road leading from St. John's Kirk to the castle on the east side against (or perhaps opposite) the house of Andrew son of Simon, namely those two booths towards the north." The site is not easy to place on the map, but the description of a building with two vaults which served as shops, with a living room above is unmistakeable. The rent is a pound of pepper to the king's household (which by implication would be interested and available for such a payment) and a half-stone of wax to Coupar abbey. The immediate interest of this document however is its mention of the castle at the end of Skinnergate; this is repeated from King William's charter describing the same burgage tenement granted before the great flood, and therefore it does not amount to evidence for the continued existence of the castle after the flood[13]. The castle we know was circular, almost certainly an earthwork and in it there was a chapel as early as the time of David I, and perhaps a good deal earlier; this surely is the *mons* denuded by the Tay and the Almond in 1209 of its palisade and buildings, including the chapel, its embankment eroded and swept away in a mælstrom of mud, timber and stone carrying the Tay bridge before it. It cannot have been a very high ringwork—probably not more than ten feet, and the king would escape readily enough to his small boat, an old man of sixty-five, with his brother, David earl of Huntingdon, shouting at a few of his household to pull harder on the oars and get out of here. Meanwhile in the town the prelates, earls and barons of Scotland waded or rowed up the High Street or South Street or if they were housed in the Watergate scrambled upstairs to escape the rising torrent. Here was a scene to inspire the muse of William McGonagal!

Some thirty years later one of the new evangelical orders of the church, the Dominican or Black Friars had their church

consecrated on or near the castle and on the same day in 1244 the king gave to the order his house in Edinburgh and his garden in Perth[14]. From this date the area of the castle became the Black Friary to which in 1266 for example the envoys of Norway came to make peace with the King of Scots. Whether the king himself resided at the Friary at this time, as so many of his successors were to do, is not known. But Kinclaven was developed as a royal castle to house the king's stores, and act as a hunting lodge and residence when he made his way along the Braes of Angus. Perth, however, was left without a castle so that when Edward I took over Scotland his instructions poured forth to the keepers of this or that castle, but always to the warden of the town of Perth—because there was no castle there. Unfortunately, there is absolutely no documentation to reveal when the town wall was built. It does not seem to have been very high and my own surmise is that it was meant to do two things: to show the wealth and importance of the town, to act as a status symbol, and secondly to prevent a recurrence of the great flood of 1209, keeping out the waters of the stank or mill-stream which flowed round three sides of the town. If that second conjecture is correct then obviously the waterfront must also have been secured by raising solid wharves; in Rutherford's map there is an interesting line of buildings running parallel to and midway between the Watergate and the river and at right angles to the burgages, a line which may represent a strengthened waterfront for medieval Perth.

The evolution of the community of Perth in the fifty years between Baldwin the lorimer and the flood of 1209 is not well documented but some evidence of change can be gleaned from surviving charters. Thus already when Malcolm IV granted the booth in Perth to Baldwin he addressed his charter to " the provosts and all his other burgesses of Perth." This phrase implies a great many things. Within a burgh the king was entitled to rent from each of those holding land of him, but from a very early date in his reign David I refers to this rent as his *firma* " farm," that is to say fixed amount, from his burgh. He had given to the responsible officer a target figure to produce, but it was the officer's responsibility to see to the collecting of the individual rents and if he made a surplus or a loss then that was his good or bad fortune. With some burghs the responsible officer was the sheriff and the grieves or provosts remained his deputies or agents. In the case of Perth, however, they had entered into a direct relationship with the king who expected that they would be chosen from among his burgesses. Moreover as King William's charter of 1209[15] to the burgesses shows, and as other burgh charters confirm, from about 1180 each town was held responsible in common for payment of taxes or aids to the king. These documents reluctantly reveal to us an active burgh community accepting responsibility for the payment of its

own farm and its own taxes through the medium of provosts chosen by it from among its own number. But only those of wealth and resources could undertake the responsibility for such financial burdens. So much was this the case that when in 1209 the king granted his charter to the burgesses he explicitly laid it down that those within the burgh who wished to deal with the burgesses in the market should also have to be responsible with them for the king's aids. The implication is clear: within the burgh there were burgesses and there were also a great many others who lived there but who were not admitted to the privileges of burgess-ship and who had impudently claimed that neither should they be admitted to taxpaying. They would not be denied personal freedom nor the right to deal with their property as they wished, but they were excluded from the privileges within the burgh of determining the regulations by which the inhabitants were to live and practise their trades and of choosing the provosts who represented them to the outside world. And so when we come to the charter granted by King William to the burgesses of Perth in the year 1209, we should understand that it was just that—a grant to *some* of the inhabitants of the town.

With King William's charter we seem at first to enter a world of haphazard and quirky regulations thrown together with no very obvious regard for logic or convenience, whether of the modern scholar or the medieval business-man. But the charter as we have it is a precious survival from the campaigns which flowed back and forth over the town between 1296 and 1338 destroying not only houses but also the documents of Perth's early history. Behind it probably lie several lost charters—at Inverness there were four charters of King William—expressing individual grants or small groups of grants which were brought together and strung into one long document in 1209, so that the same subject recurs as it did in those earlier documents rather than in one neatly rearranged set of provisions. Thus a statement in the middle of the charter that the burgesses are to have their gild merchant except for fullers and weavers was not necessarily the first grant of this gild. But there is a further caveat of which account must be taken: that the evidence of town documents in England and the continent shows that charters were often concerned with matters in controversy, but passed in silence over privileges which were well established. They express the ruler's recognition of something which may have a long previous history in urban society. Such was the gild beginning as a convivial society for mutual assurance and developing into the body among which the king can find responsible provosts, which will negotiate with him over the farm, and which will press the interests of the town and especially the town business men upon him. The gild merchant of Perth may have its roots in the time of David I, but its emergence into respectability probably came

in the reign of William, not in 1209 but years, even twenty years, earlier, when the boom of the late twelfth century was well under way. The name gild merchant means, be it noted, not gild of merchants or overseas traders, but business gild, and the kind of business which was particularly important to it is broadly hinted at by the phrase " except fullers and weavers."

Medieval cloth manufacture involved a number of processes of which the earliest, spinning, carding, washing, weaving were common to any kind of cloth, though of course they could be carried out with varying degrees of care. But no basic industry—and cloth was an essential manufacture, with a rising demand for the finished product—could function on haphazard methods of production and marketing. And again English evidence makes it abundantly clear that the twelfth century cloth industry was well organised and controlled by a group of merchant capitalists within each town, often those merchants who engaged in the importation of dyes and mordants, in which, since they came from afar, considerable investment and risk was involved. These entrepreneurs arranged for the spinning of wool domestically, put the yarn out to weavers on piece rates, and had the cloth fulled, a laborious process of pounding in the wet cloth in order to felt the fibres; thereafter it might be teazed and shorn to give a fine finish. Much cloth was used in its natural colours, but there was also a high demand for cloth dyed either in the yarns or in the piece, and this dyeing took place in the sheds of the employers of working dyers. In brief there was both an employer class and a labour force, and within each there were grades: wealthy capitalists who subcontracted part of the process to employers of specialist workmen, but who controlled the whole industry and sold the finished cloth; tradesmen employed on the skilled work of teazing and shearing the cloth, weavers throwing their shuttle throughout the daylight hours to meet their quota, fullers sweating over the trough as their feet pounded the broad cloth to felt and shrink it into a tougher and denser fabric, resistant to weather and wear. So the gild of Perth " except weavers and fullers " is by implication a gild of employers from which those who labour with their hands and feet to make profits for others are excluded—excluded because they are not worthy to associate with men whose hands no longer labour with the tools of a trade.

Cloth entrepreneurs were, however, more vulnerable to competition than they liked. When the Perth charter says that no foreign merchant is to cut cloth for sale in Perth except from Ascension day (usually in May) until 1st August when they may sell in the market place doing business with the king's burgesses, it is warding off for a large part of the year the competition of cloth from Flanders or England finer than Scotland could make, and is taking up another point in the charter—no foreign merchant

is to buy or sell anywhere in Perthshire except in the burgh of Perth—which is to say that the importer may not go direct to his rural customer and either undercut or oversell his native urban competitor. All must be sold openly in the town market place where the native merchant can be sure of " fair " competition—a proviso that applies to all merchandise and not just to cloth. And what of the rural weaver whose coarse cloth could not be subjected to quality control but for which nonetheless there was an insistent peasant demand; was not his trade in rough fabric hurtful to the interests and reputation of the town cloth-makers if dressed up in the guise of finished cloth? Then let him stick to what he makes; as the charter has it: let no one living in Perthshire outside Perth make dyed or mixed cloth or cause it to be made except my burgesses of Perth who are in the gild and are responsible with my burgesses for my taxes; if contrary to this prohibition any dyed or shorn cloth is found, I order my sheriff of Perth to take it and do with it what was customary in David I's time—a statement which takes this protective measure, and the sophisticated business structure which it implies, right back into the first half of the twelfth century. Malcolm IV allowed Scone abbey to have a tailor but made no mention of a dyer.

The final provision of the charter, that no-one from outside Perth may buy or sell wool or hides except in the burgh of Perth, is in part designed to protect the control of the cloth merchant over his raw material. But its significance is wider, for Scottish wool was already being exported in large quantities to feed the multifarious looms of the Flemish cloth industry and the effect of this provision was to exclude any foreign exporter from direct access to the grower and to force him to deal with the Perth middleman.

The charter, of course, tells only one side of the story. Those who read the burgh records of the later middle ages will be well aware that on the one hand restrictive measures are continually justified by pleas of quality control and that on the other hand all consumer comment in literary and documentary sources is about high prices and shoddy goods. Most business men believed not in competition but in " fair " competition by which is meant " competition for everyone else and protection for me." The cloth merchants of twelfth century Perth were clearly of this school of thought so that for example they would brook no interference with the one material for which the town depended upon the surrounding country—fuel. I give my firm peace, says the king, to all those who bring wood or timber to Perth; let no one disturb them coming and selling after they come within one league of Perth. Now selling wood involved high transport costs over even a short distance, but quite substantial profits if that distance was kept down, and these profits went to the owner of the woodland, usually, that is, to a landowner. It is not clear who would interfere with the supplier

but there is a suspicion that what troubled the worthy town business men was a combination among their suppliers to withhold their cartloads until the price had risen satisfactorily. And finally what of the antiquarian ring of the provision about taverns: let no one have a tavern in any village in Perthshire except where a knight is a lord of the village and lives there and then let there be only one tavern? What has this to do with the burgesses? Again if we turn to England the meaning becomes clear. A tavern was not any alehouse but a place for the sale of wine, and wine had its own profits and problems. Each year it was produced in France, and especially in Gascony, in vast quantities and exported by sea to Britain for sale. The merchant who handled it must be a man of wealth and will usually become a man of greater wealth, for the demand could not abate. This year's wine turned into next year's undrinkable vinegar and must be replaced by new supplies, for there were no sterile bottles and corks to keep the vintage drinkable year after year. It has been shown that the wine merchants of London were at this time the largest single group in the patriciate of that great city, and that one of the important factors in the growth of their business was the connection they had with the royal court through supplying wine—for, of course, it was consumed only at the tables of the well-off. Now the wealthy London wine importer could meet resistance when he reached port with his tunnage from the merchants of that port: no foreign merchant may have a tavern except on his ship, said Henry II to Bristol, Dublin and other Irish towns, which is to say that the merchant may not break bulk to sell his wine to the consumer, may not open a tavern in the town. A monastery, a king, an earl, will buy wine by the tun from him either on contract or at the quayside, but he may not sell direct in lesser quantities. He must sell to a local merchant, a middleman, and this restriction is, I think, implied by the Perth charter which restricts taverns in the countryside to those places where the social claims of a knight to such an amenity cannot well be denied. In keeping the wine-seller out of the landward and confining the sale of wine to the town, the charter is closing a loophole to those wine importers who seek to avoid the town merchants' monopoly of tavern-keeping by opening up in the countryside—the end of another avenue of " unfair " competition.

So far as it goes the evidence of King William's charter is highly revealing but it tells us very little if anything about the town government nor about the men who made up the vested interests it reveals. We can complement it not only by stray documents in the English records but also by the evidence of some thirty charters of the early thirteenth century dealing with Perth properties and scattered through the monastic collections of Scone, Inchaffray, Lindores, Balmerino and Dunfermline abbeys[16]. Some

of these documents have already been quoted, but their particular fascination is that they reveal the names of about a hundred inhabitants of Perth, some of their relationships, the tofts they held, the rents they paid or charged and the names of their streets. There are no surprises in the street-names, but the rents far exceed the sixpence per toft given in the Burgh Laws, a tract of earlier date and of particular relevance to Berwick. Higher rents reflect increased demand for house and shop-room and ultimately the increased prosperity of society and especially town society.

Among the hundred townsmen are some few with trade names in the form "James the Smith," and many others with double names such as John Cokyn, William of Lynn, or James fitz Uhtred. There is only one case where the double name is followed by a trade description, and that is Henry Bald the goldsmith whom we met earlier in this paper and who occurs seven times in the thirty charters, so was clearly a man of consequence. This indeed is to be expected of a trade which handled such a valuable commodity; the goldsmith is prominent in whatever town we turn to, because of the capital he lays out on his raw material, and it may be that he soiled his own hands by working with it but was still acceptable to the gild. The other tradesmen are too humble to have surnames. Four of them, the largest group, are dyers, which bears out King William's charter in making Perth a centre of cloth manufacture, but these four are clearly not the capitalist entrepreneurs who ran the industry but the managers or workers of dye sheds which took in cloth to the order of the great merchants. The other trade names include tenteman (a cloth worker), tanner, lorimer, helmet maker and smith, workers that is with cloth, iron and leather but not the two humblest cloth workers, weaver and fuller, webster and waulker, nor any of the victual trades, flesher, baxter, brewster. These apparently were too lowly to register even in the chance sample of documents which survive.

Among the other names seventeen stand out by reason of the frequency of their occurence, four times or oftener. It may be a coincidence but it is I think a significant one that in 1296 when the Scottish towns submitted to Edward I twelve burgesses spoke for each town except Perth for which eighteen spoke, presumably because Perth was more important than the others and its governing group, the proto-council was larger—and the number, eighteen, is strikingly close to the seventeen of half a century earlier[17]. Now the business activities of these men are not described except in the case of the goldsmith, and I attribute this fact to the activities being variable and to their not involving anything which dirtied the hands with labour; some of the seventeen must have run the cloth industry but none would have thanked you for being described as "cloth-worker." Others presumably bought imported

wine for retail, or bought wool for export either by themselves in a company hiring or owning a ship, or by sale to visiting Scottish, English or Flemish merchants. Most of the documents which illustrate this trade relate to Berwick but their relevance to Perth is indicated by one or two circumstances. Thus one of the Berwick merchants, William de la Bataille who was very active exporting wool and hides and bringing back in exchange corn and wine, must surely have been related to the Perth merchant John de la Bataille for the name is not a common one. That is no guarantee that they were engaged in the same (or any) trade but then we should in any case probably eschew the notion of specialist traders who would touch only this or that cargo. Among the Perth merchants was a group with the surname Lenn or Lynn including a William and his *socius* or business partner, Richard, who must either in their own persons or in those of their ancestors have come from the Norfolk port of Lynn which specialised in exporting the grain produced by the midlands of England. King William's charter makes no mention of the grain trade but there is plentiful evidence that substantial quantities were imported annually to Scotland throughout the thirteenth century to meet the needs of a rising population and restricted arable at home and the Lynns presumably represent a family of grain factors settled far from home. In 1246 King Alexander II promised that he would see that the merchants of Perth paid all the debts they owed in the wine port of Bordeaux, and the English king in return released the Perth ships he had arrested as security at Lynn, a document which tells us that Perth was as much involved as Berwick in the importation of wine and grain paid for by exports of wool and hides[14]. If Perth was like Berwick, then the ships of London cornmongers and wine merchants tied up at the Watergate of Perth in even larger numbers than the ships of native merchants. King William's charter does indeed imply that the business men of Perth were stay-at-home middlemen rather more than venturers in overseas trade, though there certainly were overseas traders among their number.

Most prominent among the prominent seventeen is Henry son of Geoffrey son of Martin who held the office of provost in a document of the early 1220s, a document to which he is first witness and to which the burgh seal is appended. In another document of much the same time he also appears as first witness, as alderman and as appending the burgh seal[15]. Now the burgh seal betokens the communal existence of the town, its capacity to authorise the land transactions of individuals, or to undertake to pay the farm to the king. The place in which such decisions were nominally taken was the burgh court presided over by the provosts, apparently three in number at Perth[16]. But the alderman, by all comparative evidence, was something quite different—the head of the gild, with

no inherent connection with the burgh seal. Apparently the gild has effectively taken over decision-making, treating the court as a rubber stamp and disposing of the burgh seal as though the gild was the burgh—as it certainly was the burgesses. The provosts are gildsmen, and one of them is alderman of the gild, whence, I take it, he becomes the most prominent provost, *the* provost, while the other provosts becomes just baillies, town officers. It is a neat illustration of this point that in one place Henry fitz Geoffrey and John de la Bataille appear leading the burgesses and although not provosts at the time are prefixed with " dominus "—lord—as men of wealth and distinction[17].

It is not known in what Henry fitz Geoffrey traded but significantly he is found witnessing charters of two great land-owners, the bishop of Dunblane and the earl of Athol with whom he would not be on calling terms other than for business purposes. But there is room for some further speculation. For much of his reign King William had at the head of his household responsible for the purchase of large stores and sale of surplus, a Richard of the Provender who in 1203 was rewarded with the bishopric of Dunkeld. After his death his successor who also had Perth connections gave land there to the niece of bishop Richard and to her husband Henry who maddeningly does not tell his surname[18]. If it was Henry fitz Geoffrey fitz Martin then we should have much light upon the growth of the family fortunes. Under the new king Alexander II another office rose to prominence in the household giving its holder very similar responsibilities—the clerk of the liverance. In 1228 that office was given to a rising royal clerk, Geoffrey fitz Martin of Perth who in 1236 became in turn bishop of Dunkeld[19]. He cannot have been Henry's father but it would be neat if he were related to the burgess, a connection that would make him better at his job, useful alike to the king and the family. Thus it is possible that in Scotland as in England, albeit on very different scales, the fortunes of some urban capitalists were made through provisioning the king and his household, and especially through supplying the £400-worth (the equivalent of an earl's income) of wine which was consumed in a year by the court in the 1260s.

History is all too often the history of the rich and successful: the poor are with us as the rich see them and try to make them go away with gifts of alms. In this paper there has been little enough about the luckless weaver and fuller, and nothing at all about the really poor and destitute, for these men never put their names to parchment. The profile I have drawn has been incomplete but not I hope without interest. Perth was the second town of Scotland, second, that is, to Berwick, and far ahead of Edinburgh, Aberdeen or Stirling in importance. It grew from a settlement of

the eleventh century or earlier where ships came up the Tay to unload by the land routes to north and south. It flourished through royal patronage, first by receiving the privileges of a burgh, and then through business dealings with the king's household. It was the home of a small business community active in the manufacture of cloth, import of wine and corn and export of wool and hides. They were intent on making a sure profit and struggled to load the conditions of business against both the less fortunate and the more fortunate. But they were also an essential element in bringing about the rising living standards of their society.

But what I have given you is no more than a profile in two dimensions, and I should like to call to your attention the number of unsolved problems before you: the early street lines and evolution of the town; the shape and scale of the town houses, the materials of which they were built, the standard of living of those within them, the places of trade and modes of manufacture of the craftsmen, these and a hundred other things have passed untreated in this lecture because they are undocumented in the written sources. But another dimension, a solution to some of these problems *is* possible. It is emerging from the ground for two great twelfth century towns elsewhere in these islands—Dublin and Winchester—and for a seaport at Bergen in Norway. It is high time that we in Scotland took our opportunities to record the urban past before it is too late. In many towns it is too late because Victorian foundations went deep and swept away the archæological record of the past. But at St. Andrews it has proved possible to excavate a town house and to set the archæologists there upon the track of other sites and even of medieval vaults and booths hidden behind the eighteenth-century facades of town houses. The other town which should offer the same opportunities is around us, a town with a diminishing number of early buildings but still with medieval street lines and perhaps even cellars, a town with aspirations to attract a university but more successful in attracting an insurance company. Don't mistake me: I'm not a preservationist, nor hostile to business, but I have a great affection for Perth for it preserves the scale of a town in which one can live and move and do all necessary business of man and still dawdle and gossip and sense the existence of the real world of nature. It is perhaps the most attractive town in Scotland, because its heart has the shape if not the beat of King David's time. Some things have changed but not everything; it is still St. Johnstoun as well as General Accidentville. What we have from the past we should study and value before we decide to throw it away, but so far as archæology is concerned time for that study is running short. Money is available, and with sufficient effort, manpower; is there any reason why they should not come to Perth? Is there any better place to which they could come?

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16. The following paragraphs are based upon: *Scone Liber*, Nos. 21, 45, 46, 79, 80, 82, 86, 88, 89, 90, 95-97, 169; *Dunfermline Registrum*, Nos. 144, 149, 166; *St. Andrews Liber*, 316; *Arbroath Liber*, i, No. 215; *Inchaffray Charters*, Nos. LXIX, LXX, LXXI, LXXIII; *Lindores Chartulary*, Nos. LXVI, LXVII, LXVIII; *Balmerino Liber*, Nos. 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 30; *Coupar Chrs.*, No. XXV.
17. *Cal. Docs. Scot.*, ii, Nos. 813-815, 819-820.
14. *Cal. Docs. Scot.*, i, No. 1694.
15. *Scone Liber*, Nos. 86, 97.
16. *Scone Liber*, No. 82.
17. *Inchaffray Charters*, No. LXIX.
18. *Dunfermline Registrum*, Nos. 138, 140. Richard of Leicester, burgess of Perth, was related to John, Bishop of Dunkeld, 1210-1214.
19. *Scone Liber*, Nos. 62, 93.

* * *

Since this paper was written and set up in type I have come to the conclusion that King William's charter to Perth, which is dated at Stirling on 10th October and which, as the witnesses show, belongs to 1205-10, was granted on that day in 1209. The circumstances are of great interest and are discussed in my forthcoming volume of the Edinburgh History of Scotland, *The Making of the Kingdom*.

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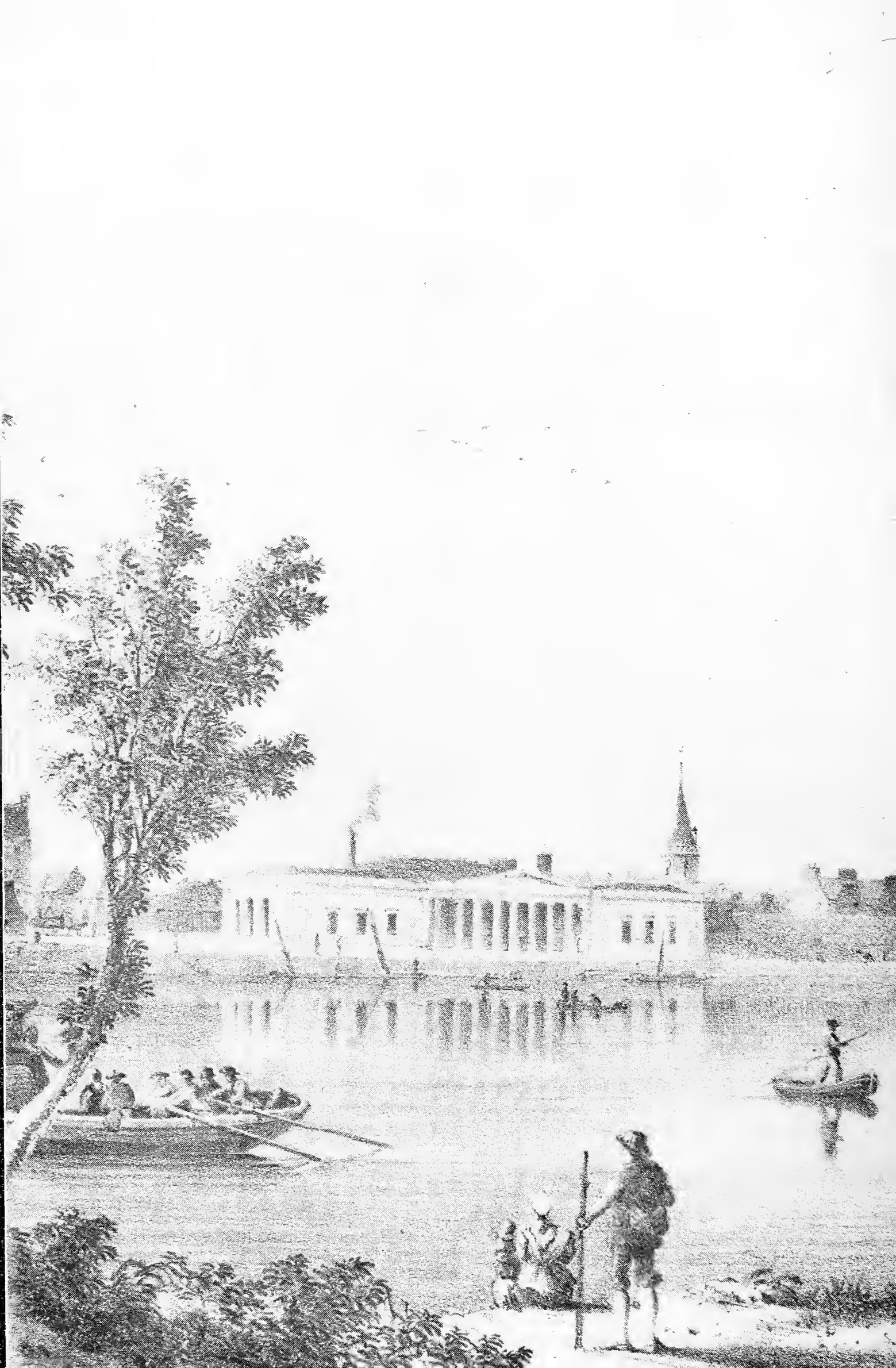
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